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MEMOIRS

OF

MADAME MALIBRAN,

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Vol. 2.

BY

THE COUNTESS DE MERLIN,

AND OTHER INTIMATE FRIENDS.

WITH A

SELECTION FROM HER CORRESPONDENCE,

AND NOTICES OF THE

PROGRESS OF THE MUSICAL DRAMA

IN ENGLAND.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

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SECOND MEMOIR.

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CHAPTER I.

Early years of Maria Garcia—Character and accomplishments—Voice—Departure for New York—Reception and success of the Italian Opera in New York—Maria's marriage—Failure of her husband—Reappearance on the stage—Departure for Europe.

Maria Felicia was the eldest daughter of Manuel and Joaquina Garcia, and was born at Paris on the 24th of March, 1808. At the age of eight years she was brought over to this country, where she continued without intermission for nearly nine years.

From her earliest girlhood she gave tokens of her future excellence: her gaiety, the vivacity of her impressions, her warmth of feeling, her generous temperament, were innate manifestations of a being enriched with all those graces, qualities, virtues, and accomplishments, in which she afterwards, and at a more matured period, excelled; for though known to the public only for her supereminent powers as a musician, she was in private life equally appreciated for her amiable disposition and mental acquirements. Like most persons adorned by the greatness of their endowments, she was, in her earlier youth, diffident of her own powers. Her genius was an impetus, more than an inclination; but it was an impetus controlled by a desire to deserve the praises she received, as well as to imitate the perfections of the best; and this feeling led her to aspire to an excellence even beyond the pale of mere ordinary mortality.

At the early age of sixteen, her voice had

acquired so much power, both as to intonation and execution, that she appeared at the King's Theatre in the part of Rosina in Il Barbiere di Siviglia. She subsequently performed Felicia, in Meyerbeer's Crociato in Egitto, to Velluti's Armando: her performances were eminently successful, and were consequently received as the index of future excellence. In the autumn of the same year she appeared with an increased credit to herself at the York Festival, where she sang, among other pieces, "Rejoice greatly," in the Messiah, and "Una voce poco fa." But the gem on that occasion was the "Alma invitta," from Rossini's Sigismondo.

Maria's voice was a rich contralto, possessing all the qualities of a soprano. Her intonation was perfect. Hers was, in fact, a persuasive voice, that bent us to its wish, and realised the sentiment of the poet equally with the feelings of the audience. "She could," says a talented writer, "like the singers of ancient days, transport the mind into sublimity, infuse

the spirit of benevolence, inspire divine energy, arouse the slumbering conscience, restore social sympathies, regulate moral feelings, restrain the fury of ambition, unlock the iron grasp of avarice, expand the liberal palm to deeds of charity, breathe the sacred love of peace into the bosom of the turbulent, and the mild spirit of forbearance and toleration into persecuting bigotry and prejudice."* Her decorations, we may add, resembled the natural inflections of the nightingale, or the warblings of zephyrs upon an Æolian harp; yet never unadapted to the nature of the melody, or the genius of the composition.

In the winter of 1825, Manuel Garcia having assembled a company for the purpose of opening an Italian opera at New York, carried his daughter from the scene of her early triumph. Having crossed the Atlantic, she, like another Columbus, sought to explore a new region, untrodden as yet by the Graces or the Muses.

* Mr. I. Nathan.

Young, ardent, and intrepid, she seemed to be endowed with the spirit of the first discoverer of that long hidden world. But it is too often to be observed that the first undertakers of a new enterprise are generally the only persons who are unfortunate in their experiments; they waste their energies and their strength in overcoming a difficulty, of which those who are destined immediately to follow, reap the fruit and the advantage. The trials, the difficulties of Columbus, the noblest and the gentlest of men, were rewarded with the laurels of honour and applause; but the leaves soon dropped from his brow, withered by the blast of calumny, and darkened by the vapours of detraction, till the favours of the multitude were at length turned into hate. He who performed everything, encountered everything, suffered everything, was supplanted, vilified, and traduced, and finally overwhelmed.

The comparison is perhaps incorrect, as refers to the professional enterprise of Malibran. She

had no enemies; but was nevertheless destined, in place of reaping the due reward of her perseverance, to pass through one long-continued scene of mortification and disaster; her talents, comparatively speaking, unrewarded,—the affairs of her family sinking into confusion,—and, to conclude the catalogue of her misfortunes, her marriage unfortunate, as, in obedience to their wish, she gave a hand, we fear, without a heart, to François Eugene Malibran.

Strange to say, the only opera of the New World, supported as it was by the unremitting exertions of Mademoiselle Garcia, the known abilities of her father, together with the assistance of a very efficient company, failed in procuring an adequate remuneration for even the outlay attendant upon an establishment of the kind. New York, which ranks next to London as to intelligence, commerce, and resources, could not, or would not, retain the prize that had been offered to it in the superior genius of Malibran. After many struggles, the

finances of the Corps Operatique fell into confusion, and it was finally dissolved.

Nevertheless, the youthful debutante found friends in that country; and we may quote, from no unworthy authority, the opinion of the intellectual class of the Americans:—"The whole success of the opera rested upon the exertions of Mademoiselle Garcia, a host in herself. Her talents were appreciated by the transatlantic dilettanti. She was idolised, and to this day her vocal powers stand pre-eminently exalted in their estimation."*

It was in the midst of these disheartening and distressing circumstances that M. Eugene Malibran sued for and obtained the hand of the accomplished exile of more genial countries. There is a current that sometimes runs against us, which it is in vain to attempt to oppose or resist. It is the tide not leading on to fortune.

Not long after her marriage, fresh misfortunes

* Mr. I. Nathan.

occurred. Eugene Malibran became a bankrupt, the inhabitant of a jail. This passage in Madame Malibran's short and brilliant career, though darkened by the predominance of so many sad and depressing circumstances, forms nevertheless an epoch in her life, of which, but for these very same calamities, we should have as yet known nothing. This unfortunate era of her life reveals to our view this amiable woman exerting her talents with undiminished ardour to liquidate the debts that were not of her own contracting, and giving up even her marriage settlement to the creditors of her husband. We here, in fact, behold the successful débutante, without a murmur, exerting all her energies, all her faculties, in behalf and for the benefit of a man whom she once trusted as the being the most capable of sheltering her from the storms and troubles of sublunary vicissitudes.

To complete her misfortunes, her efforts on the bleak stage of the American hemisphere, on which, after her husband's bankruptcy, she

appeared in English characters, were but indifferently repaid; so that her health, her youth, her grace, her beauty, and her genius, were alike sacrificed, since altogether united they availed her nothing. From this consideration, it was at last resolved upon by her family that she should return to Europe.

CHAPTER II.

Malibran's arrival in Paris (1827)—Makes her *début* in Semiramide—Success—Desdemona—Italian opera in London (1829)—Ancient Concerts—Chester Festival—Gloucester—Appears in Susannah at Covent Garden—Reappearance in Paris—Ancient Concerts in London (1830)—Fidalma—La Cenerentola—Orazzi—Liverpool Festival—Paris (1831)—Bologna (1832.)

In 1827, therefore, the unhappy Malibran returned to Europe, from which she had in an evil day departed, and once more took her station amidst the accomplished circles which, enraptured with genius, hailed her return with delight.

She arrived in Paris totally alone and un-

provided for. She was received by her husband's sister.

She shortly after made her appearance, for the first time before a Parisian audience, in the part of Semiramide. A timidity, too often the accompaniment of superior talent, interrupted her for a moment in the difficult passage, "Trema il tempo;" but rallying her powers, she concluded the performance amidst the plaudits of an audience predetermined to criticise, and previously impressed with the meritorious abilities of singers equally gifted with herself. The intellect, so superior to the mere merits of a cantatrice, was soon felt. Her pleasing, varied, and astonishing dramatic talent, her grace, and the vividness of all her impersonations, proved irresistible assistants to the melodious power of song, and Malibran was triumphant! A French critic, describing her first appearance in Semiramide, says: "If Madam Malibran *must* yield the palm to Pasta in point of acting, she possesses a marked superiority in respect to singing."

In the same season her performance of Desdemona created a strong sensation, from her deep feeling and fine acting. This was in her nineteenth year, and when the performance of Pasta was fresh in the recollection of the audience. In February 1829, Madame Malibran and Mademoiselle Sontag appeared for the first time together.

Her next engagement was at our own Italian Opera, where she appeared on the 21st of March, 1829, in the character of Desdemona. Her range of characters at this period were Rosina, Semiramide, Romeo, Tancredi, Ninetta, and Zerlina.

On the 25th of April, in the same season, she sang her first song at the Ancient Concerts. She was engaged at the Chester Festival of 1829, when she sang, "O had I Jubal's lyre," "Praise the Lord," and "Rejoice greatly;" which pieces, from her not yet having made herself sufficiently acquainted with the style of Handel, were pronounced at the time to be unsuccessful efforts. In the "Deh parlati" of Cimarosa, she is

described as exhibiting the very triumph of profound and touching expression. At the Gloucester Meeting, in September, she sang the "Ombra Adorata" from Zingarelli's Romeo, and at Birmingham, in the following month, she shone forth in great power. The old musicians said that Handel's "Holy holy" had never been so finely sung since the days of Mara. Who that heard can forget her *last* singing of it? Here, too, she sang for the first time the "Non piu di fiori" of Mozart, Willman accompanying.

Previous to her Birmingham engagement, she had volunteered her gratuitous services for the benefit of the proprietors of Covent Garden Theatre, then in a state approaching to bankruptcy; and made her first appearance in London in an English part, as Susannah in the Marriage of Figaro.

In the winter of 1829 she made her reappearance in Paris, in the part of Ninetta in La Gazza Ladra; and in the following January

she assisted at the benefit of Sontag, in the character of Tancredi.

On the 28th of April, 1830, she reappeared at our Ancient Concerts, when she sang the "Ombra Adorata," the duetto from Cimarosa's "Gli Orazzi," "Ivenami omai," with Donzelli, and the "Placido é il mar," from the Idomeneo. At the last concert of that season, May 5, 1830, she sang the "Holy holy," "Non piu di fiori," and the duet, "Deh prendi," from the same opera (La Clemenza.) At the sixth Philharmonic Concert, May 17, she repeated the "Non piu di fiori," and sang, with Mr. H. Phillips, "Bell Imago" from the Semiramide.

It is a credit to our English audiences that they always appreciated the very perfect air from La Clemenza. We remember upon one occasion, when our national taste in music was being depreciated in Malibran's hearing, that she, in her own animated way, undertook to defend us on that score, and ended by saying, "That she never sang such a proportion of

classical music in any country throughout Europe as she did in England." If we wanted a proof of the unenvious character of her disposition, we should find it in the gratification she ever expressed towards Willman for the execution of those lovely passages for the " Corno di bassetto," and which performance, so full of soul, so exquisite in expression, *she felt* entitled him to a very large proportion of the applause bestowed upon the singer.

On the 13th of March she played Fidalma for two or three nights, upon the celebrated first appearance of Lablache in this country. Her descending run of the double octave in the trio, " Lei faccio un inchino," electrified the audience. On the 29th of April she appeared in a part unworthy of her talents—Angelina in La Cenerentola. At the ninth Ancient Concert of 1830, May 12, she introduced the song, " Il caro ben," from Sacchini's Perseo. In the same month, Gli Orazzi e Curiazzi, (Cimarosa) was revived, and our heroine appeared as Orazzia

The performance was distinguished by the grandest efforts, both in singing and acting, particularly in her last scene, where she denounces her brother for having slain her lover. At the Worcester Festival, which took place on the 14th, 15th, and 16th of September, and the Norwich on the 21st, 22nd, 23rd, and 24th of the same month, she was engaged.

At the Liverpool Festival, October the 5th, 6th, 7th, and 8th, she performed, among other pieces, the "Gratias agimus," with Willman, the "O Salutaris" of Cherubino, and, with Mrs. Knyvett, Marcello's psalm, "Qual annilante." The last time she sang this duet was at Manchester, with her favourite, Clara Novello, when the audience could scarcely be restrained by the sacredness of the place in which it was performed, from an open demonstration of applause.

After the conclusion of the three festivals this year, Malibran returned to Paris, and again met with a most flattering reception in the part of Desdemona.

In September, 1831, the opera season again commenced in Paris. In the intermediate period Madame Malibran remained in seclusion. But in December we find her again upon the Parisian theatre, having succeeded Pasta. La Gazza Ladra was the opera selected for the occasion. Soon after this effort, she was compelled by indisposition to withdraw for some time from the stage.

In the autumn, 1832, we find her concluding an engagement at the theatre at Bologna, where she was to perform for eighteen nights.

CHAPTER III.

The Corinne of Madame de Staël, the prototype of Malibran—Malibran in Rome—at Milan—English and Italians compared—Venice—Teatro Garcia.

It is now six-and-thirty years since the world were favoured with the Corinne of De Staël. More near to our own time—nay, as it were but yesterday—we behold in Madame Malibran the Corinne of the past repeated in the present. The illustrious daughter of M. Necker knew not that the favourite creation of her genius was to be in reality personified. She knew not that the inspirations of her muse were to be, and at

no far distant period, renewed, revived, and embodied. Corinne crowned at the capitol was but a prelude to Malibran crowned with the acclamations of Europe.

But there are other points of resemblance. Corinne was celebrated for the charms of her voice, for her dramatic powers, for the wonderful capabilities of her genius, and, above all, for her simplicity of disposition, her generosity, and her benevolence. The Corinne to whom the senators of Rome awarded the crown of laurels, emblematic of the triumphs of genius developed in a woman, was but in part the offspring of that country so prolific in its mental productions. Born, nevertheless, in that same fertile soil, having exhaled the fragrance of its air and its perfume, having partaken of that sentiment which a climate peculiarly grateful and indulgent confers, she was almost in every respect an Italian. Madame Malibran was a daughter of a climate scarcely inferior, and from both parents inherited the enthusiasm

which distinguishes their more accomplished inhabitants.

The comparison goes still farther; the Corinne of the capitol, overwhelmed by her misfortunes, perished in the meridian of her charms: Madame Malibran expired in the 28th year of her age, after a youth fertile in mortifications and disasters.

It was in the spring of 1832 that Malibran, the Corinne of our modern days, made her appearance in Rome.

This city, called eternal, is but the faded monument of past successes, or rather but a solitary mourner over the peopled dead. The stupendous galleries of the Coliseum remain as emblems of the past, but their aspect is that of awful and fearful desolation. It is by our impressions only that we are to judge of remnants so magnificent, and so tremendous in their proportions, yet fitted, like the Pyramids, to resist, for centuries to come, the withering hand of unsparing Time.

Amidst this ruin, this desolation, a gentle voice is heard, an immortal spirit breathes, and the melody of song is felt to vibrate on the ear, and the songstress is worthy of the glories of the past! The recitative, as delivered by Malibran, was admirably calculated to re-awaken the glorious conceptions of past ages, in a people much attached to their ancient name, and whose genius stoops only to the necessity of circumstances. The fame of Malibran corresponded but too well with the illusions of the past; and the Romans crowded around her, as one in every way dear to them, and worthy of their praises. The triumphs of applause, of an applause so connected with the sympathies of the Romans, had not, however, in any way spoiled the simplicity of her disposition, or in any way affected the goodness of her heart; and it was in the midst of praises, honours, and caresses, that she gave a concert for the benefit of a family in a state of indigence, which was only one of innumerable instances of private

benevolence which characterised her sojourn at Rome.

We now turn to her celebrated *début* in the character of Norma, at Milan. "The excitement of her auditors," writes a friend, "was extraordinary; each time she quitted the stage, she was required to reappear, to receive fresh applause; and the authority of the police was necessarily resorted to to quell the tumult, which, however, only subsided on the interposition of the chief authorities of the city."

It was here that a medal in honour of her excelling talents was struck by the sculptor Valerio Nesti, bearing her likeness, with the motto on the reverse, "Per universale consenso proclamata mirabile nell' ayvone e nelli canto." Thus the modern Corinne, reappearing once more amongst the lively and enthusiastic Milanese, reawakened all their admiration; nay, more, fulfilled all their expectations of delight.

The English possess more vigour of character than the inhabitants of the south; which is in part the result of their physical constitution, unsubdued by the mild influences of a clime which seems that of a perpetual summer; but this same physical vigour acting for a time upon the more inward faculties of the mind becomes soon exhausted, and is at any time little fitted for the expression of enthusiasm. But amidst the warm, the genial, the softening climates of the south, the case is diametrically opposite. Thus, while in England the ranks of the noblesse, with marble coldness, scarcely condescend to give the slightest token of applause, in Italy all participate in a general and equally felt enthusiasm.

The feeling of love, admiration, and respect, with which Madame Malibran was received, was therefore participated in by all ranks universally.

It was here, also, that the Duke Visconti offered her 420,000 francs, (£17,500) for

one hundred and eighty performances, distributed over five seasons, with apartments, carriage, table, &c. The enthusiasm throughout the whole of Italy had risen to such a degree, that even these terms, liberal as they appear to us, were not considered to be overmuch, coupled as they were with other advantages, such as a free benefit, &c.

The principal cities and capitals of Europe were eager to have her among them. Their rivalry, which had the agreeable advantage of being without hate, was exerted as it were in unison; for each party could understand, and at once enter into, the feelings of the other; but she had promised the Venetians; and though the liberality of her disposition might make the acquisition of money a matter of importance, she had never accustomed herself to the subterfuge of avoiding one engagement for the sake of another.

Venice—a city like the ruins of more ancient Rome—Venice had petitioned for her presence—

she too, another Rome, reduced to a state of indigence and melancholy: she too was, however, to be enlivened and delighted with the melody of the queen of song. That city, once the favoured, but now the deserted daughter of the sea—that city of the gondolier chanting his chorus from the verses of Tasso and of Dante, like the plaint that could still lament in tender accents over the decay of her grandeur—that city beautiful in its solitude, beheld, in the subject of this memoir, a being eminently calculated to awaken its sympathies, and to revive the memory of her former power. Malibran and the Venetians were well met, for they, like the Milanese and the Neapolitans, give up their whole souls at once to the influence of their imaginations; and admiration in them is ever a sensation too importunate to be resisted. The instances of love and of respect which Madame Malibran received from all ranks at Venice are too numerous to repeat. Her public performances at Venice were completed

in their finale by her repetition of Amina in La Sonnambula, and that for the purpose of a charitable action. This intermixture of the kindest virtues, with the astonishing talent displayed in the course of her impersonations, completed the enthusiasm of the Venetians. "She was," writes a friend, "visited by throngs, and the storm of applause lasted a full half hour; a vast multitude afterwards followed her home, and surrounded her residence, where enthusiasm arose almost to infatuation."

This last and final performance in honour of the Venetian people occurred in the Teatro Emerannitio, whose proprietor had entreated her to sing at his theatre for one night, which she at once consented to do, on a stipulation that her performance might be entirely for his own advantage. This theatre is now called Teatro Garcia, in honour equally of her goodness and of her talents.

Such was the nature of her affecting farewell

of the Venetians, whom she had intended again and again to revisit, but who, alas! were destined to see her no more!

CHAPTER IV.

Malibran's re-appearance at Naples—at Milan—Return to Paris —Italians and the French compared—Malibran again revisits Italy—Paris—London—Sonnambula at Drury Lane —Fidelio—Divorce—Marriage with De Beriot—The Maid of Artois—Madame de Beriot visits the continent for the last time.

We now behold Madame Malibran de Beriot in the zenith of her charms, in the meridian, in the splendour of her powers. We behold her as the prima donna of the far celebrated theatre, San Carlos, at Naples; the first in size and magnificence in Europe. The Italians have not forgotten, with their supposed political degradation, their enthusiasm. Malibran needed only to

appear to please. She affected the hearts of the Neapolitans; that lively people, so acute, and yet so warm in their impressions. She had become known; in a word, she had become their own. Amidst the torrent of acclamations with which she was continually received, this accomplished woman, when relieved from the fatigue attendant upon a public appearance, displayed, in every action of her domestic life, a goodness, a sincerity, and a generosity of disposition, that must endear her memory to posterity, as much as the more vivid and inspiring recollection of her dramatic performances.

From Naples she progressed to Milan, where the same applause, the same enthusiasm, the same expressions of devotion to her person, were repeated. The instances of admiration and respect which she here received, as at Naples, are too numerous to repeat. Her Neapolitan friends, however, may remain assured that the sentiments they expressed were not obliterated by future successes from her

heart; the meed of praise was offered to an amiable as much as to a talented woman, and it was felt, remembered, and appreciated. Her fame had now spread over the kingdoms of Europe.

The Italian people are jealous only with regard to the object of their private affections; they are not jealous of fame, of talent, of glory, in another. The flattering testimonials contained in the papers of the day might be the result of favour from a party who felt interested in her success; but the fame of Malibran penetrated into remote provinces out of the reach, for the most part, of those flattering testimonials. It was through the influence of private letters, containing the unbiassed statements of individuals, that the fame of Malibran was so widely disseminated. Amidst the tumult of universal and most deserved applause, it was with profound grief that the Milanese and Neapolitans saw her depart.

The scene of her celebrity now again opens

in Paris, the ancient capital of Charlemagne, of Pepin, of the Capetian Kings, of Napoleon, the city of the Louvre, the emporium of fashion, and the brilliant focus of all modern society;—Paris, which occupies a place in the map of Europe, much more central than any of the cities contained within the circle of the Italian states, is consequently of easier access to the inhabitants of most European countries; its political importance, its situation, and its numerous population, together with its boundless sources of public amusement, all combine to assemble great multitudes from every other nation in the world.

Amidst this radii, the modern Corinne now once again appeared. The performance chosen for her *début* was Semiramide. The subsequent performances were the Barbiere di Seviglia, Otello, and the Romeo e Giulietta, of Zingarelli. The sentiment of the Italians often engenders a deep-rooted and impassioned enthusiasm; the vivacity of the French gives

birth to expressions of enthusiasm, not less sincere for the time, and not less impassioned. Their volubility must have a vent. In lauding the talents of another, they fancy themselves identified with the applauses contained in their own approbation. The Parisians, however, were, to our personal knowledge, perfectly sincere in their admiration of the brilliant talents of Malibran.

Malibran now re-appeared at the celebrated theatre San Carlos, at Naples. She had, upon a former time, awakened all the enthusiasm of that lively people, and it suffered no diminution. Her powers, still reaching on towards further maturity, and the excellence of her private character, ever adorned as it was with innumerable instances of goodness and generosity, rendered indeed forgetfulness on their parts impossible. We need not here weary the reader with the repetition of new triumphs; we shall rather state that Malibran's chief satisfaction at this time consisted in witnessing

the progress of her accomplished sister, Mademoiselle Garcia, who appeared with her in Pacini's opera of Irene.

At this period in the career of Madame Malibran, the fame of her talents and the generosity of her conduct, in all matters of ordinary life, had exalted her so much in the eyes of Europe, that nations contested with one another for the honour of having her amongst them. It was her nature, however, not to become what is usually termed spoiled; she displayed no affectations, no unworthy prejudices, no undue preferences of one set of people at the expense of another. Hence, in order to meet the desires of the different inhabitants of those countries whose capital cities lay remote and apart from each other, vast distances were to be overcome, and immense journeys were to be performed. But these various occasions for physical exertion were, perhaps, not unsuited to the vivacity of her temperament and the natural activity of her disposition. She is

therefore to be traced much in the same manner as a meteor which blazes across the heavens, shedding around the most brilliant irradiations; and, as the beholders still continued to gaze, suddenly departing to appear within the circle of a new zenith, yet again re-appearing with renewed splendour, and with rays still more dazzlingly diffused.

From this period, therefore, the Corinne of our times must be followed throughout her rapid and irregular course, after a manner that may correspond with the celerity and the rapidity of her movements. Nor shall we enumerate her various impersonations, nor repeat at large the expressions of enthusiasm everywhere displayed in her favour.

From Naples Madame Malibran proceeded to Paris, where, to descend to the language of mercenary computation, immense profits were added to those general expressions of applause at all times increasing. From Paris she proceeded to London, where, on the 13th of May,

1835, she undertook the English version of La Sonnambula, at Covent Garden Theatre.

This performance created a great "sensation" in the dramatic world, which extended to all classes, all ranks, all professions. "On her entrance," says a contemporary, "her reception was completely electrifying;" the whole audience rising *en masse*, with deafening shouts and cheers, to encourage her in her new and arduous attempt. The manner in which she acquitted herself can never be forgotten by those who witnessed a performance, the complete success of which has induced so many untiring repetitions. Her performance was one in which it was difficult to say which was most admirable, the finished excellence of her vocalisation, or the natural beauty of her acting.

The impersonation of Fidelio succeeded to this *chef d'œuvre* in the dramatic art, and her united and transcendent merits as an actress and as a singer placed her now on the very pinnacle of fame.

During this brilliant season Malibran appeared also at numerous parties amongst the *élite* of the *noblesse*, the mere enumeration of whose names only could give the reader any idea of the general industry of her life, and of the multiplicity and importance of her various performances.

In the autumn of the same year she was again at Naples; and again, in 1836, she appeared in Paris.

It was in the spring of this year that her unfortunate union with Monsieur Malibran was dissolved in due form by the courts of Paris; and in the month of March, in the same year, she married Monsieur de Beriot, to whom she had been long ardently attached, and by whom she had had several children.

On this occasion the Queen of the French presented her with a magnificent agraffe, richly adorned with pearls. There was wanting no better testimony of the respect in which she was universally held by the court of France.

On the 2nd of May following, Madame Malibran, of late more popularly known as Madame Malibran de Beriot, re-commenced her English performances at Drury Lane Theatre. On the 27th of the same month, she appeared in the new character of Isolina, in Balfe's opera of the Maid of Artois. Of this performance we shall only say that it is of too recent occurrence for any one to forget the united charms of melody, sweetness, and harmony, with which she enriched a composition of itself beautiful and pleasing.

At the close of this season she proceeded to her chateau at Ixelles, near Brussels, where, after recovering her fatigue, she progressed to various capital cities, satisfying, like the prophets of old, the hitherto ignorant multitudes who till now had only heard, through means of distant rumour or report, of her resplendent abilities.

It is seldom that expectation is gratified; and a celebrated authoress has defined only two

objects which are likely to surpass the comprehensions of a modern, and consequently an enlightened, imagination; namely, St. Peter's at Rome, and the ocean. All individual wonder was to be reckoned disappointed in whatever related to personal excellence. But Malibran was an exception even to this fastidious rule. The metaphysicians of Germany, equally with the musical dilettanti, expressed their satisfaction at her performances, in a manner that proved at once that they had not been disappointed. At Aix-la-Chapelle, such was the respect shown to her moral character in conjunction with her brilliant talent, that the military honours generally reserved for the salutation of royal personages were upon this occasion accorded to her.

Up to this period have we then traced the public career of Malibran, in reference to the scenic characters of the drama. But a gulf yawns before us! We approach the verge of the dread abyss of time and of eternity!—for Mali-

bran is about to return once more to England, and to appear for the last time! She is about to perish in the zenith, in the perfection of her fame; yet, though so young, her destiny was nevertheless accomplished!

We shall therefore go back to that portion of her history which relates to her oratorio performances; for she excelled in the sublimities of sacred composition as much as in the more varied science of the stage.

CHAPTER V.

Oratorios—York Festival—Malibran's great success—Opinions of the press—Spectator—Atlas—Athenæum.

We have run through the histrionic career of Malibran, and may now revert to a species of performance which developed the disposition of her mind much more distinctly than even her brilliant and faithful impersonations of the characters of the drama; we allude to her inspired eloquence in the delivery of sacred music.

The most brilliant talents, the most captivating graces, the most tuneful melody, were

dignified, and indeed exalted, in Malibran by a deep sense of religious devotion; since a religious belief, and a fixed undeviating principle of rectitude, formed her character, adorned the simplicity of her domestic avocations, and, indeed, accompanied her through all the varied scenes of her career. Undeviating rectitude of conduct was perhaps to be expected in a woman of superior understanding; but when we find a person still in her youth so much praised, caressed, and flattered, seeking happiness and consolation in religious meditations, our admiration becomes lost in our respect. Her personal friends, and one perhaps beyond all others, can affirm to her piety; and perhaps mutual sentiments, sympathies, and opinions, which had their foundation, not in the tumult of public applause, but in a sense of virtue, goodness, and true religion, constituted the bond of a union extremely happy to both, and only broken by that which arrests all friend-

ships, by dissolving life itself, though the hope may remain that again they shall be united.

That Malibran, with a mind thus, as it were, sublimely imbued, should give an almost beatified expression to sacred music, will not appear so surprising, though it doubtless must have excited the astonishment of those who were acquainted with her only through the medium of the theatre.

It was as early as the year 1825, and at the age of scarcely seventeen years, that Malibran, as Mademoiselle Garcia, appeared at the York Festival. She had indeed become a general favourite of the public in consequence of her successful *début* the previous season at the King's Theatre. But oratorio singing is a trial far more difficult than that at the theatre; the decorations, the dresses, nay even the encouraging plaudits of the audience, being wanting; and the utmost musical ability may fail if unsupported by a powerful as well as a re-

ligious conception of the nature, and, above all, of the intention of a sacred performance. These considerations, in fact, weighed so far with the best judges in such matters, as to inspire in them a doubt as to her success—at least in a comparative point of view with her other performances.

These doubts and uncertainties, however, were quickly dissipated by her unequalled singing in the Messiah, and the ease with which she exchanged the compositions of Rossini and Mozart for those of Handel and Haydn. The execution of the air, "Rejoice greatly," created a very powerful sensation. Her auditors were greatly struck with the "splendid power" and elevation of sentiment expressed in her singing; and again, in the Creation, she gave the air "On mighty Pens," with a degree of brilliancy, delicacy, and sweetness, which she alone, say our contemporaries, had been able to impart to that exquisite composition.

We need not repeat the catalogue of her

oratorio performances: to do so, indeed, would be but to multiply expressions of praise and admiration—praises which cannot increase the sense of delight in those who had the happiness to hear her, and which must at the same time, we fear, prove inadequate for the information of posterity. We shall, however, here insert a few remarks gathered from a source in every way respectable, in order to show that it is not upon our own personal judgment that we have spoken, nor from that of her more intimate friends. The authorities whom we shall quote will speak for themselves; and we can only add that their remarks are chosen for their brevity, not on account of the merit of their approbation, since the passages which we have omitted are equally energetic in the character of their applauses.

"We have heard," says the critic of the Spectator, "singers in years gone by, of whose powers we cherish a vivid and grateful recollection, and we look round among those who are living for some of present excellence and

greater promise; but in Malibran were united all the powers and capabilities, all the gifts and graces, that were scattered among her predecessors and contemporaries. She had an innate perception of beauty and grace in every art; we have discoursed with her about pictures and architecture, about the Latin classics, the poetry of Dante and Goëthe, the drama of England, and found a mind not tinged, but impregnated with a love of all that was great and enduring of every country and age."

"Have we not all witnessed," says the Atlas, "expression in every form mirrored in her countenance, how lofty in its indignation, how angelic in its tenderness! Her voice at times appeared supernatural, the tones of a sibyl could not penetrate more deeply."

"We have heard her," says a writer in the Athenæum, "in the same evening sing in five different languages, giving with equal truth and character the intense and passionate scene from Der Freizshutz, and those sprightly and charm-

ing Provençal airs, many of which were composed by herself. The extensive compass of her voice enabled her to command the whole range of songs when is usually divided between the contralto and the soprano. She was, it is true, often hurried away by the tameless vivacity of her spirits into flights and cadences which were more eccentric than beautiful. We have heard her, in the very wantonness of consummate power, rival the unvocal Arpiggi of De Beriot's violin, and execute the most sudden shakes and divisions upon those highest and deepest notes of the voice, which less perfectly trained singers approach warily and with preparation. But those knew little of the dignity Malibran could assume, or of the unexaggerated expression which she could throw into music, even the plainest and least fantastic, who are not familiar with her oratorio performances, with the earnest pathos of her scena 'Deh parlaté,' Cimarosa's noblest song, with the calm and holy sweetness of her Pastorelle from the Messiah, 'He shall

feed his flock ;' or, in a strain loftier than these, with her delivery of that most magnificent of recitatives, ' Sing ye unto the Lord,' from Israel in Egypt. In this last she so completely identified herself with the spirit of the scene, that no painter of Miriam the Prophetess ever dreamed of face, form, or attitude, more appropriate, more instinct with sublime triumph, than hers at that moment."

CHAPTER VI.

Private life of Madame Malibran—Her genius—Early perfect developement of her powers—Her perception of national character—Her Desdemona in Paris—Her accomplishments—Her freedom from professional envy and jealousy.

Attired in the picturesque costume of the drama; walking in an atmosphere of lights, and amidst a scene of splendid decoration; uttering the language of the poet, and warbling the notes of melody and song, Malibran de Beriot appears as an enchantress elevated beyond the attributes of human nature, and exempt, as it were, from its miseries and necessities. But

let us visit her in her private character; let us observe her in the comparative solitude of domestic retirement;—let us quit the syren of the stage, and turn to observe the woman in all the simplicity of her nature,—and we shall find the cantatrice equally accomplished in the virtues, as she was in the talents, of her sex. The author has had, as much as any one, the opportunity of seeing her in the tranquillity of private life; and while he confirms those anecdotes of her benevolence, which her friends have already given to the public, he will also be able to add some equally authentic details connected with the goodness of her heart.

The genius of Malibran may indeed fill every reflecting mind with astonishment, since she seems to have anticipated time, and to have arrived at a degree of eminence to which few even of the most talented ever attain. We have proofs of the transcendent abilities of a De Stäel, of a Genlis, of Madame Cottin, of our own Miss Edgeworth, and many others;

but all these had the advantage of time in perfecting their intellectual acquirements. Had they been arrested in their career at the early age of twenty-eight years, they would probably have left, comparatively speaking, but few marks of their ability. Even the talent of Shakspeare himself was probably but undeveloped at so early an age; and the moral drawn from his immortal comedies and tragedies might have slumbered equally with the passions so skilfully portrayed, had accident so prematurely deprived the world of his genius.

The talent of Malibran had arrived at wonderful perfection; nor was it merely confined to the developement of her professional abilities. She penetrated, at a glance, the genius of the nations amongst whom she happened occasionally to reside;—nay, more, she could adapt herself to their habitual tastes. Her performance of Desdemona in the opera of Otello, in the French capital, is one instance

out of many. She knew the love of effect in a French audience, and, in order to gratify them, altered her acting. In the finale, Desdemona is generally smothered by the Moor; but Malibran endeavoured in her terror to escape. Expectation was thus prolonged; and to fulfil the horror of the scene, she caused the incensed Othello to draw her towards the front of the stage, and there complete his vengeance.

Malibran was very fond of riding, and was a graceful though not a perfect horsewoman. She had a natural talent for drawing. In public she was serious, distant, and respectful; in private she was gay and childish. She was charitable, liberal, sincere, warm in her affections, of a most forgiving temper, of exquisite sensibility, unassuming to humility, mild and simple in worldly affairs as a child. She was ever desirous of casting the mantle of love over the failings of others; and while her kindness was thus extensively manifested to all with whom she had any intercourse, her gratitude to

others, who showed marks of love to her, was unbounded. When her kind friends sent her anything that they thought would be acceptable, it was her study to think how she could return an equal token of affection. Her manners were marked with the simplicity which generally characterises exalted minds; and though she could not be unconscious of the high estimation in which she was held, she was yet untainted with either vanity or pride. Her friendship in weal and woe was fervent, disinterested, and sincere.

That her habits were those of perfect temperance, is to be ascertained from the spontaneous testimony of all those who were constantly in her company; that she felt no hatred, envy, or jealousy, towards her contemporaries, is to be gathered from her willingness at all times to unite with all, and assist those less talented. That she should have ever been termed avaricious, is sufficient to disprove all the rest, since we know that she was impelled,

by the unequalled generosity of her temper, to perform the kindest and most liberal actions. As ostentation formed no part of her character, her deeds of charity were not blazoned forth to the world.

She had a vivacity of fancy, and a strength of intellect, in which few were her superiors. No person could render common incidents more entertaining by the happy art she possessed of relating them: her invention was so fertile, her ideas were so original, and the points of humour so ingeniously and unexpectedly taken up in the progress of her narrative, that she never failed to accomplish all the purposes which the gaiety of her imagination led her to attempt.

We have observed her in different points of view: we have seen her exalted on the dangerous pinnacle of worldly prosperity, surrounded by fawning and flattering friends, and an admiring world. We have seen her marked out by prejudice as an object of dislike. We have seen

her bowed down by bodily pain and weakness; but never did we see her forget the urbanity of her sex, her conscious dignity as a rational creature, or a fervent aspiration after the highest degree of attainable perfection. We have seen her on the bed of sickness, enduring pain with the patience of a Christian, with the firm belief that the afflictions of this life are but for a moment!

CHAPTER VII.

Malibran courted by the English aristocracy—The Duchess of St. Albans—Fête at Holly Lodge—the Duchess's presents to Malibran at her last benefit.

That Malibran was equally esteemed and beloved in the more select circles of private life, it would be almost superfluous to mention. Nevertheless, as it happens that English society differs in no small degree from Constantinople in manners; in as far as the English are seldom or ever hurried away by what may be rather coarsely termed the intoxication of excitement, and consequently remain aloof and distinct from anything that, however excellent in itself, may

approach to the professional; it is no small honour to the memory of Malibran that we are able to recollect her taking her place amongst the daughters of the richest aristocracy in the world, and becoming the friends of many known for their domestic virtues, talents, and accomplishments.

Malibran was also happy in the friendship of the Duchess of St. Albans. This lady, from the amplitude of her fortune, as much as from the dignity of her rank, had it at all times in her power to distinguish the daughters of genius, of which she was herself, in her earlier years, a very pleasing example. It is too often a consequence of prosperity, that the favoured constellation shines coldly on less fortunate stars; and, as a philosopher has still more sharply remarked, "it is the ill consequence of prosperity never to look behind it." But the Duchess of St. Albans was ever the friend and the benefactress of merit; nay, more, the hospitable and beneficent hostess to those whose

reputation and accomplishments rendered them worthy of her personal acquaintance.

The Duchess's fête at Holly Lodge, on the 11th of July, 1835, remarkable for its taste and magnificence, is no less so also for the presence of Malibran. It commenced with a concert performed in the open air; a novelty not exactly adapted to the capricious nature of our English climate, but perhaps the more to be prized whenever it can be accomplished. Malibran, Grisi, Rubini, Ivanoff, and Lablache, took the head in this mid-day chorus. This brilliant performance was succeeded by an exhibition of morris-dancers attired *à la pastorale*, and in the midst of modern dresses, altered fashions, and the march of intellect, (amongst the visiters,) the company were regaled with the refreshing spectacle of an animated measure tripped in the manner of the "olden time." A *dejeuner dinatoire* followed.

Novelty might now be thought to have done its duty; but the concert, dance, and

banquet was but the prelude to further festivities. The Duke of St. Albans, attired in the costume of his office as Grand Falconer of England, presently led the way, with a sylvan train of foresters and falcons, to a grassy spot, where the amusement of hawking commenced This sport was succeeded by a concert of national music.

Malibran, as we have already stated, had performed in the previous concert, which was Italian. She, however, again volunteered her services; and perhaps never acquitted herself better than she did in the duet "Vive le Roi" with Braham. The entertainment afterwards concluded with a ball. Malibran's dancing kept pace with her other acquirements; and carried away, as it were, with the spirit of the scene, she persuaded Lablache to accompany her in a waltz. Hers was indeed the poetry of motion. She then led off the then first-danced, and rather difficult, Russian Mazurka.

Nothing could exceed the regard felt by

Madame Malibran towards the Duchess of St. Albans; a feeling which was equally reciprocated on the occasion of her last benefit and appearance in London, the 16th of July, 1838. The Duchess, after the performance, visited her in her dressing-room, and presented her with a flaçon, and, by way of souvenir, her embroidered handkerchief. Little did the noble giver think that these very *cadeaux* should, in the space of two short months, be employed to raise her drooping spirits, and wipe the tear of agony from her dying eyes!

CHAPTER VIII.

Anecdotes—The Americans—Malibran and the shepherds—"Molly put the kettle on"—Presentiment of early death—Presentiment of evil—An accident.

Much vivacity of temper is very frequently united to great sensibility of temperament. The fortunes of Malibran were various, and in many respects tragic; but the natural bias of her disposition was at once playful and cheerful, consequently her manners frequently possessed a degree of joyousness that approached to the comic. But those points which tell best in the manners and conversation of the witty, fall dull and languid from the pen of the biographer.

With all her sincere and deep-felt respect for the Americans, she could not help occasionally indulging in raillery at their pet phrases. She "calculated" on returning to them, and with improved fortunes, and a more happy condition of her married life, to show them to what height of importance she had arrived. "I *guess*," she was wont to say, "how *pretty considerably* surprised and delighted they will be to see me again, half a woman and half a nightingale. And as they *calculate* upon me, I think I may safely *reckon* upon them. O yes!"

An excusable, or rather an amiable degree of vanity was mixed with her more serious determination to return to that country. She was now no longer the afflicted wife of a bankrupt, but happily married, and possessed of an independent fortune. In America she had suffered her greatest misfortunes; and it is surely no small proof of her serious love for that country and its people that she should so

very much have desired to revisit them. In fact, she made this favourite intention of hers a frequent subject of conversation.

Exercise on horseback was to her both a relief and a relaxation, and it was one, moreover, in which she excelled. In one of her excursions in the neighbourhood of London, in one of those sequestered lanes which have escaped the building mania, she began humming an air which her companions happened to praise; and as there chanced to be no audience but her own party, she gave the words of the air as she sang it. It was the finale to the Maid of Artois. The solitude was, however, speedily dispersed by the arrival of two drovers with a flock of sheep. Instead of rushing through the equestrians, these men stopped, listened, and seemed lost in admiration. This profound, and at the same time perfectly unpremeditated deference to her power of song in the open day, and from persons whose minds were necessarily occupied with matters that had but small

reference to the empire of the muses, was a compliment which Malibran, with her usual quickness, was not slow in appreciating. Here was no orchestra—no scenic representation—no previous enthusiasm—no glitter to excite the feelings—and no enchantment but the chance-sung notes, as it were, of a simple individual. She felt the compliment in every respect to be, as it certainly was, so totally unpremeditated and heartfelt, that she at once declared she felt as much pleased, if not even more so, than upon those grand theatrical occasions when, after a triumphant finale, amidst the blaze of lights, dresses, and a brilliant company, the whole audience had risen to add importance to their plaudits. She continued and finished the air which, like the pipe of ancient Pan, had fascinated the rustic shepherds of the king's highway. Increasing the power of her voice in proportion to the distance that gradually intervened between the parties, she finished in the style of her very best public

performances. The scene was peculiarly effective.

One evening she felt rather annoyed at the general prejudice expressed by the company then present against all English vocal compositions, the opinion being altogether in favour of foreign music; some even going so far as to assert that nothing could be good of which the air was entirely and originally of English extraction. Malibran in vain endeavoured to maintain that all countries possess, though perhaps in a less equal degree, many ancient melodies peculiarly their own; that nothing could exceed the beauty of the Scottish, Irish, Welsh, and even some of the old English airs. She then named many compositions of our best modern composers, Bishop, Barnett, Lee, Horn, &c., declaring her belief that if she were to produce one of Bishop or Horn's ballads as the works of a signor Vescovo, or Cuerno, thus Italianising and Espagnolising their names, they would *faire furore*.

In the midst of this discussion she volunteered a new Spanish song, composed, as she said, by a Don Chocarreria. She commenced—the greatest attention prevailed; she touched the notes lightly, introducing variations on repeating the symphony, and with a serious feeling, though a slight smile might be traced on her lips, began:

" Maria tràyga un caldero
De àqua, Llàma levanté
Maria pòn tu caldero
Ayamos nuestro tè."

She finished—the plaudits resounded, and the air was quoted as a further example how far superior foreign talent was to English.

Malibran assented to the justness of their remarks, and agreed to yield still more to their argument if the same air sung adagio should be found equally beautiful when played presto. The parties were agreed; when, to the positive consternation of all present, and very much to the diversion of Malibran herself, the

Spanish melody which she had so divinely sung, was, on being played quick, instantly recognised as a popular English nursery song, by no means of the highest class. Shall we shock our readers when we remind them that

"Maria tràyga un caldero,"

means literally "Molly put the kettle on."

This was the Spanish air! the composer's name being Chocarreria, a most appropriate one for the jest.

Whatever may be said regarding the existence of mental presentiment, whether viewed in the light of an accidental coincidence, or considered as the result of a temperament prone to superstition and foreboding, it is true that certain previous ideas of a fatal character have often been but too correctly fulfilled. A feeling of this nature so entirely occupied the mind of Henry the Great of France, that on the morning of his assassination he felt equally oppressed and confused. This is an instance out of many incidental to the history of every country, and

if we consult the memoirs of private life, we shall find instances innumerable. Strange and startling as it may appear, Malibran, the ill-fated darling of the Muses, while yet in the possession of health, youth, and strength, was warned of coming death. This sad foreboding of a too early fate she imparted to her confidential friends. Alas ! how truly, how sadly, was it verified !

The following is another instance of her remarkable presentiment of coming events. In the month of July she was affected with an indisposition of a nature so very slight, however, that two days afterwards she took her accustomed exercise on horseback. Her mind at the time was impressed with a feeling that something fatal was about to happen to her. Under this idea it was remarkable that she insisted upon riding out the morning of the accident, though strongly advised against it by her friends. Her whole conversation turned upon a melancholy presentiment which she entertained, that

she was not long for this world. On being rallied for this, she with her usual gaiety said, "she would gallop it off." On setting off at a canter, the horse, one she had ridden the whole season, suddenly broke from his paces, and she lost all control. Bounding round the inner circle of the Regent's Park, the excited animal was stopped by a stranger. Unprepared for the sudden check, Malibran was precipitated with violence against the paling. With that energy of character so natural to her disposition, she could not be prevented by the entreaties of her friends from performing two characters on that evening!

CHAPTER IX.

Malibran's versatility—Quality of her voice and its management—*Tours de force.*

The range of Malibran's abilities was greater than that of any singer who preceded her. The characters in which she appeared comprised the highest walks of operatic tragedy, the most delicate and refined of domestic comedy.

She has trod the stage as the proud and vengeful Semiramide, the gentle and betrayed Desdemona, the impassioned Romeo, the chivalrous Tancredi, the dependent yet

sensitive Ninetta, the withered prude Fidalma, the romantic Amina, the heroic Felicia, the constant Isolina, the devoted Fidelio; while in the orchestra she was equally successful in the majesty of Handel, and the *naïveté* of a French romance. Language was no bar to her. She surmounted vernacular difficulties with the same ease that she moulded her voice to varied expressions.

She entered into the peculiarities of national character with an equally happy felicity, and was the finest possible illustration of the admitted axiom, that genius is of no country. Both as a singer and an actress, she was distinguished by versatility of power and liveliness of conception; she could play with music of every possible style, school, or century.

A remarkable combination of fine qualities concentered to render Madame de Beriot the wonder she was to all who beheld her. She appeared to have an instinctive perception of the graceful, the beautiful, and the true in nature.

She saw at once what was to be done, and she obeyed the impulse of her feelings. Hence the unpremeditated exhibition of some of her finest actions and attitudes. She also possessed an energy of character that kept those about her, and who watched her progress, in constant admiration; and, added to her genius and energy, she had acquired a spirit of industry that would put to shame the most mechanical plodder.

Her voice, which was a contralto in character, took a range that was perfectly astonishing. We have heard her descend to F and E flat below the lower C in the treble clef, and reach C and D in alt. In execution she kept the listener in a state of wonderment; and in the most complicated *fioritures* she not only performed all that the flexible mechanicians could achieve, but even there she beat them in their own stronghold, for she was sure to add some exquisite grace entirely her own; and we venture to say that no mortal ever heard her sing the same piece precisely alike, or exactly

repeat a cadence, when she has been encored.

What is remarkable too, and at once displays her great genius, her cadences and adornments were always in keeping with the character and style of the composition she was singing. And as to her *tours de force*, many years will probably elapse before we hear her equal in that one branch of vocal art. Her principal characteristic, however, was expression; and expression in all its features, shades, and varieties, from its loftiest epic flights, embracing the sublime of anger and the profoundly pathetic, down to the winning and playful. It is needless to recur to her expression in the most prominent parts of the Sonnambula and the Fidelio. But they who remember her in the Romeo, how piercing her tones of anguish! how intense the agony of her features! or her look, attitude, and tones in the last scene of *Gli Orazzii e uriazzi*, will store the reminiscence of them among the treasures of high art.

She prided herself on her professional industry, and it was no trifling indisposition that could make her relax one day from her duty. But her health was suffering, not only by the toils of her vocation, but oftentimes by "the grief that passeth speaking." Few thought

> "When the strain was sung,
> Till a thousand hearts were stirr'd,
> What lifedrops, from the minstrel rung,
> Have gush'd at every word."

CHAPTER X.

Manchester Festival—Illness of Madame Malibran—Death.

We now approach that fatal point in her earthly pilgrimage, for which the Manchester Festival must ever be remembered. "So young, and her destiny so soon accomplished!" But in that destiny itself there are features which must strike the beholders with wonder as well as terror. Happy those, whose fortunes enable them to retain all the elegancies of life—whose means enable them to study the arts and sciences as a pastime, to quit or resume them at their pleasure; or who, according as

fancy prevails, may content themselves with sitting in critical judgment on the efforts of those who must please, or shrink back into the arms of poverty and insignificance!

Passing over the trials of her girlhood, and of her first unhappy marriage, we behold her gradually, yet speedily, ascending that high eminence of which the poet says,

"Ah, who can tell how hard it is to climb?"

until, leaving all her competitors behind, she attained the highest pinnacle of fame. Behold her triumphant in the capital of France! the pride of her profession, and idol of all hearts! every one her friend, and riches pouring in upon her in the midst of those applauses she so highly merited! Accompany her into Italy! The ancient spirit of the Romans is roused by her voice; the Neapolitans, Milanese, and Venetians, look upon her as a seraph descended from their beautiful and tranquil skies; and all is harmony, love, devotion, and affection! She revisits England, and an enthusiasm, though

less livelily expressed, not the less sincerely felt, awaits her steps. The audience of one of the finest theatres in the world, passing by the custom of their former proprieties, rise *en masse* on her appearance. She is the idol of what is termed fashionable life, the friend of the most accomplished of her sex. The triumphs of success promise, if possible, a still more brilliant future; for as yet she is only twenty-seven years of age. A long career of honour is before her.

But in the midst of her high achievements—at the very moment of her most successful triumph—death springs up suddenly beside her, and strikes her to the tomb!

On her arrival at Manchester, on Sunday, the 11th of September, she was seized with shivering, headache, and other symptoms of indisposition. On the following days her illness increased: and in the mean time the oratorio performances began. On the evening previous to her first morning performance, she

sang no fewer than fourteen pieces among her friends at the hotel; and, although warned against over-exerting herself, she persisted. Lablache said of her too truly, "*Son esprit est trop fort pour son petit corps.*" On the Tuesday, although suffering, she sang both in the morning and evening.

On the Wednesday her indisposition was still more evident, yet she went on, and her delivery of the last solo in the "Israel in Egypt," "Sing ye to the Lord," never can be forgotten by those who heard it. On the evening of Wednesday, she bore up with her lioness heart against the struggles of nature. The last notes she uttered in this world were in the duet from Andronico, "Fanne se alberghi in petto," which she sang with Madame Caradori. It was encored, and the effect was tremendous. The shake she made at the top of her voice, at the close of the duet, was perfect. Amid the tumult of an audience transported with wonder and delight, she was led off exhausted. She

had made an enormous effort, and achieved a triumph over her sinking frame. She had excited herself to an almost supernatural energy, lest it should be said that her illness was feigned.

A correspondent of the Morning Post says, "Her agonising cries that night will not be erased from the memory of the writer, who was within a short distance of the room in which she expired. She constantly ejaculated, '*j'étouffe, j'étouffe.*'" This is indeed most affecting.

From this time she continued to grow worse, and at twenty minutes before twelve o'clock on the night of Friday, the 23rd of September, the much gifted, much beloved Malibran expired.

The demise of Malibran, in the full meridian of her splendid career, cast a gloom over all ranks and parties; and selfish or unthinking indeed must have been that heart that did not mourn over the premature extinction of the

queen of song! Her death has created a void in the worlds of music and the stage, that may never again be filled; and to have seen Malibran in even any one of her various triumphs, will be, among her contemporaries, an event ever to be remembered and cherished with pride and with rapture.

The death of this unhappy lady was attended with circumstances of a peculiarly painful nature —on which, however, we must drop the curtain; remarking only, that among her innumerable friends and admirers, it is to be lamented that no one could have been found of sufficient energy of purpose to have insisted, in her state of health, upon her abandoning her intention of attending the Manchester Festival. For the rest—

> "No friend's complaint, no kind domestic tear,
> Pleased thy pale ghost, or graced thy mournful bier.
> By foreign hand thy dying eyes were closed,
> By foreign hand thy decent limbs composed,

By foreign hand thy humble grave adorn'd,
By strangers honoured, and by strangers mourn'd!"

END OF SECOND MEMOIR.

"LAST SCENE OF ALL."

DEATH AND FUNERAL.

On the afternoon of Sunday, the 11th of September, 1836, Madame Malibran de Beriot and her husband arrived at Manchester, to fulfil their engagement at the festival, and stopped, in the first instance, at the Royal Hotel; but upon learning that Lablache, Ivanoff, Assandri, and Caradori Allan were at the Mosley Arms, they removed there the same afternoon. They were shown a double-bedded room on the first floor, which Madame Malibran said would do very well, and they agreed to share a sitting-

room with Signor Lablache and Mademoiselle Assandri. The bed-room was No. 9, and on Mrs. Richardson, the landlady of the Mosley Arms, showing them to it, Madame Malibran observed that she had been in the Mosley Arms Hotel before, but in its former situation. Mrs. Richardson said that it was twelve years ago, and Madame Malibran immediately rejoined, "My bed-room was No. 9 there, and now I shall have No. 9 here; is it not singular?" They were attended by only one male domestic, a foreigner, who had not been long in their service. No female attendant came with Madame Malibran, but she was desirous to engage one here. On her arrival at the Mosley Arms she appeared to be in tolerably good health and spirits, though she complained to a gentleman, a member of the festival committee, who called upon her that afternoon, of shivering and headache.

On Monday morning she took at breakfast her usual diet of a few oysters and some porter

diluted with water, which she had always found to be the best strengthening preparation for her great vocal exertions. She did not attend the general rehearsal of the performers, vocal and instrumental, which took place at the church on the Monday; but there was no reason to suppose that at that time she suffered much, if at all, from indisposition. Again, on Tuesday morning, previously to going to the first oratorio, she took some oysters and a small quantity of porter and water mixed. On Tuesday evening, before going to the concert, she complained of a sensation of sickness, and again on Wednesday morning, before she rose, she said she did not feel well; but she nevertheless persisted in going. On that morning she tried again to take her usual meal of oysters and diluted porter, but she was sick, and could not finish her breakfast. Mrs. Richardson told her that she thought that the porter did not agree with her, and Madame Malibran replied, "What can I do? I must

take something for my voice, and I find this the best thing I can take." However, she did not take any more, either at that time or subsequently. At the church that morning, many persons who had repeatedly heard her before, were of opinion that she was not in good health. In the evening she was no better; indeed her weakly sensations had increased, when she went to that concert which was to prove the premature and melancholy conclusion of her brilliant but short career. She took a part in Beethoven's canon (from Fidelio) for four voices—

"What joy doth fill my breast!"

This piece, which was short, and was not encored, was the only one in which she sung before that which will henceforth be always associated with the melancholy reminiscences attaching to her name—the duet between Andronico and Irene, "Fanne se alberghi in petto," in Mercadante's opera of Andronico. The latter part of the duet was sung a second

time, and almost immediately after its conclusion, Dr. Bardsley, who was seated in the pit, was summoned to attend Malibran, who had fainted. Shortly afterwards, one of the stewards announced to the audience that she had become so ill, that Dr. Bardsley had thought it necessary to bleed her in the arm, and that he did not think it would be safe for her to sing again that evening.

One little circumstance occurred about this time, which is strikingly characteristic of the energy, the almost *fierté*, of the manner which Malibran sometimes displayed. Immediately after she was bled, some bystander observed in her hearing, that she would be better shortly, and able to resume her duties that evening. Turning to the speaker, with a fire in her eye that few would have expected to have seen in a female faint from exertion, excitement, and loss of blood, she exclaimed,—"What! do you think I am like your English fighters, that I can lose blood and go to work again directly?"

As soon as possible she was conveyed to the Mosley Arms Hotel, and to her bed, where she received every attention from her kind-hearted landlady.

On Thursday morning, when Mrs. Richardson went to see her, she complained of a violent pain in her head, and requested her to touch her temples, and feel their throbbing. She added, "I have been trying my voice in bed, and it as strong and clear, and I have as much power, as though I were in perfect health; but every note seems to vibrate through my brain." She was subsequently very sick, and Mrs. Richardson persuaded her to take a cup of coffee, which, however, her stomach immediately rejected. Mrs. Richardson told her she was not fit to leave her bed, and besought her not to think of doing so that day; but she replied, "In the voice that I am, the public will not believe that I am ill; therefore I will make the attempt." She got up, but was not able to dress herself, and was assisted by Mrs.

Richardson. While dressing her hair, of which she had a profusion, she exclaimed to her husband, "O dear! this hair: why should I not get rid of it? I can wear a cap; and I am sure I should feel a great deal better if this hair was taken from my head." When dressed, M. de Beriot led her into the sitting-room, and there she had another very violent attack of sickness and vomiting, while the borough-reeve's carriage was at the door of the hotel, waiting to convey her to the church.

It may give some idea of her condition at that time, to mention, that in the expectation of her again suffering from this cause in the carriage, sheets and towels were placed in it; and she was so debilitated from the effect of so much sickness, that she was supported, almost carried, from her sitting-room to the carriage, into which she crept on her hands and knees. She complained of pains in her head, chest, and stomach; but, as we have stated, she determined to go to the church, not-

withstanding her own belief that it was a dangerous step, and that she was not physically equal to the exertion which the parts assigned her in the performances would have required. She went—and, shortly afterwards, experiencing a violent attack of hysteria, was immediately conveyed back to the carriage, and, accompanied by Dr. Bardsley and Mr. Worthington, was taken to the hotel, and placed on a sofa in a private sitting-room, where she rested a while, and said, "I feel myself more comfortable here;" but she still complained of the pain in her head, which was much increased by the violent retchings and sickness that continued during the remainder of the day to distress and weaken her. Dr. Bardsley and Mr. Worthington continued in attendance upon her, and at half-past twelve o'clock that day they issued a medical certificate to the effect, that in their opinion she could not with safety appear at the oratorio that morning, or at the concert that evening.

On the Friday morning Dr. Hull was called in, and, after a consultation, it was made known to the committee by him and Dr. Bardsley, that Madame Malibran de Beriot was worse, and that she would not be able to sing that morning. On Sunday evening, the 18th, Dr. Belluomini arrived from the Quadrant, Regent Street, having been sent for by M. de Beriot, who had become very anxious on the score of his wife's continued ill health. Dr. Belluomini, besides being thoroughly acquainted with the constitution of his patient, from having been her physician for some years, had known her from childhood, and had for some time also been on terms of friendship with her husband and herself. On his arrival he found her in bed, and she appeared much delighted to see him. On that evening she seemed more composed, and slept a little during the night, which she had not done during the two preceding ones. She was still so weak that it was deemed not desirable to remove her from her bed even for a

moment, till Tuesday morning, the 20th, when she was placed in a chair for a few moments till her bed was made; but she appeared much exhausted by the effort, and during a great part of the afternoon remained silent and motionless. During the evening she was somewhat better, both her cough and fever having in some degree abated; and M. de Beriot wrote to this effect to Signor Lablache at Norwich.

Next morning, however, she again grew worse. De Beriot became very much dejected, and appeared then to dread the fatal result which subsequently took place; for when exhorted to keep up his spirits, and at all events to conceal his distress from his wife, as it would tend to retard her recovery, and with care she might get better, he said, "O no; she never will get better; it's impossible!" On Thursday afternoon, the 22nd, he wished to have some surgeon called in, and Dr. Belluomini agreeing with him that some accou-

cheur should be sent for, Mr. William Lewis, of George Street, on the suggestion of Mrs. Richardson, who had previously mentioned the names of several eminent practitioners, was called in about seven o'clock in the evening. He immediately ordered all her hair to be cut off, and this having been done by M. de Beriot himself, vinegar was applied to her head and temples, hot fomentations to her stomach, and hot water to her feet, and every means resorted to that could be thought of to induce a favourable turn to the disorder, through a reaction in the system. Dr. Belluomini asked Mr. Lewis whether in his judgment Madame Malibran's state of pregnancy materially affected her in relation to the disorder. Mr. Lewis expressed a decided opinion that it did not, as she was in an early stage of pregnancy. His impression on first seeing her, from the state of her pulse and insensibility, was, that she was fast sinking under the malady, and could not recover. In point of fact, she never rallied

for an instant, except to take a little barley water from the hand of her husband, and she expired at precisely twenty minutes before twelve o'clock on Friday night, the 23rd of September, after an illness, dating its commencement from the Wednesday night, of nine days.

M. de Beriot had shortly before been prevailed upon to retire from the chamber where he had, with the most assiduous and affectionate solicitude, watched by the bedside of the patient, taking no rest and refusing food. The painful intelligence was no sooner communicated to him by Mrs. Richardson, in the most delicate way possible, than he fainted and fell upon the floor with considerable force. He was in a very painful state of distraction for some time after his restoration to sensibility; and, whether in compliance with the entreaties of Dr. Belluomini, we know not, he never entered the chamber, or saw the body of his deceased wife again. When his immediate

departure was determined upon, he sent for Mr. Beale, music-dealer, of St. Anne's Square, to whom, though not previously acquainted with him, he expressed his wishes with respect to the funeral. He particularly desired that no cast of the head or face should be taken, nor any portrait, and that no *post mortem* examination should be made; and, in short, that the body should not be touched by any one, except in the course of the necessary preparations for interment. He also gave a written document to Mr. Beale, authorising him to conduct the arrangements as to the interment, and to fix the time, place, &c., of the funeral, as he should deem proper.

Before M. de Beriot quitted the house, he presented to Mrs. Richardson a ring of turquoises, set in black enamel, which had been worn by Madame Malibran herself, and also a locket, containing some of the deceased's hair; and both he and Dr. Belluomini promised to write to her when able to do so. He was

so reduced in strength that he could scarcely stand, and was supported by Mrs. Richardson to the carriage, in which he quitted Manchester within one hour after the death of his wife.

The daily papers spoke of the strong reciprocal affection which De Beriot and his gifted wife manifested for each other during their short stay at Manchester, and mentioned one or two instances in which Madame Malibran had exhibited her anxious affection for her husband's health and professional *éclat;* while his unremitting and assiduous attendance by her sick-bed, his eagerness to anticipate her every wish and want, formed an equally marked characteristic of the strength of his attachment to her. To these facts may be added, that even when she was unable to speak to him, Madame Malibran frequently pressed his hand in hers, and turned her head on one side that she might look upon him. In the course of a conversation with Mrs. Richardson, at an early stage of her illness, she mentioned

that she had known De Beriot nine years, and had been seven years of that time married to him, but that she had not been able to make their marriage known till within the last two years; what circumstances had prevented its due publicity she did not say. She then added, emphatically, "If he had had any faults, I should have found them out before now; but there never was such a man. I am certainly blessed with a most affectionate husband; and that, I am afraid, few can say in a similar situation to myself." She had two children during this marriage; one, a girl, died in her infancy, and the other, a boy, about four years old, of whom she spoke to Mrs. Richardson, as residing with his paternal aunt, at an estate purchased by his father and mother, in the neighbourhood of Brussels. M. de Beriot wrote to his sister, after his arrival in London, that it was his intention, after staying a few hours, to proceed immediately to this estate, to join her and his child.

In justice to all parties it may be right to state, that from the time of Dr. Belluomini's arrival, Drs. Hull and Bardsley, and Mr. Worthington, who had attended Madame Malibran up to that period, at the request of the festival committee, ceased their visits. Dr. Belluomini declined holding a consultation with them on the case, on hearing their reasons for the mode of treatment they had adopted; alleging, that as he was a homœopathist, and as his practice was consequently very different from theirs, a consultation could be of no use whatever. Dr. Belluomini was not at all known to the faculty in Manchester, nor does it appear what his course of treatment of the deceased had been from the Sunday evening up to the time when Mr. Lewis was called in.

Amongst other groundless rumours one that was very rife was, that Madame Malibran was in the habit of taking wine or liqueurs too freely, and that it was to this cause, and not to any sudden faintness from over-exertion,

that must be attributed what some were pleased to call her "sham" illness. There is authority for the most unqualified contradiction to this rumour, both as to the cause of the illness which terminated so fatally, and as to the general habit so roundly charged upon the unfortunate deceased. So far from its being anything like the truth, it is affirmed that since her arrival at Manchester she never (with one slight exception) tasted either spirits or wine; and for this reason, that, in her own opinion, either the one or the other would have had an injurious effect upon her voice; her regimen for which was a few oysters and a small quantity of bottled porter, sometimes diluted with water. The slanderous report had been so industriously circulated, that by some means it reached the ears of Madame Malibran herself, and, it is needless to say, gave her no inconsiderable pain. She mentioned it to Mrs. Novello, exclaiming indignantly, "To think, Mrs. Novello, that they say I drink! O it is

grievous! What will they say next of me?" Mrs. Novello endeavoured to soothe her, saying, "Never mind, dear; it is the envious spirit of inferior talent to depreciate those who excel." On another occasion, when, thirsty from the fever, Madame Malibran asked Dr. Bardsley if she might take a little champagne and water, the doctor said she might, and she took a small quantity, which she seemed to enjoy, as being cool and refreshing. But so great was her objection to spirits, that when a little was recommended to her, mixed with water, she absolutely refused to touch it. Sir George Smart, when told of this rumour, expressed himself in very strong terms. He said he had known her intimately from her childhood, both in private life and in her public professional engagements, and he was satisfied that the assertion as to her habits was destitute of the slightest foundation in truth.

It has already been stated that M. de Beriot, just before quitting Manchester, gave to Mr.

Beale a written authority to conduct the whole of the funeral arrangements, in such a manner as he should deem consonant with the feelings of her friends. Mr. Beale, naturally sensible of the delicacy of the situation in which he was placed, was desirous to have the sanction and co-operation of the Festival Committee, or at least of some committee deputed by them to act with him; and, in accordance with his wish, expressed to some of the influential members of that committee, a special general meeting of the whole, comprising about three hundred and twenty gentlemen, was convened by circular for Monday morning, for the purpose of taking the subject into consideration. There was a very numerous attendance in obedience to the summons, more members being present than on any former occasion during the existence of the committee. It was determined at that meeting that the funeral should be a public one, and a sub-committee of fifteen or sixteen gentlemen was appointed

for the purpose of making the requisite arrangements. This sub-committee accordingly met, and continued in deliberation for some hours. They appointed that the funeral should take place on the following Saturday, and as Madame Malibran de Beriot was of the Roman Catholic faith, the service should be first performed by the side of the body, at the hotel, by the Rev. James Cook, the senior priest of St. Augustine's Chapel, Granby Row; and that immediately afterwards, about ten o'clock in the morning, the funeral procession should set out from the Mosley Arms, for the Collegiate Church, within some part of which edifice the deceased should be interred.

It being thought desirable that, if possible, M. de Beriot should return to Manchester, and attend the funeral as chief mourner, Mr. Beale, jun. (of the firm of Cramer, Addison, and Beale, London) was written to, at the request of the sub-committee, to ascertain if M. de Beriot was in London, and if so, to wait upon

him, that he might represent the wish of the committee, and the obvious propriety of his paying the last mark of respect to the remains of the deceased. A letter was received by return of post, stating that on Mr. Beale commencing his mission he found that De Beriot had already quitted London for Antwerp or Brussels, which place was not certain. No letter had been received in town from M. de Beriot since his departure. Under these circumstances, it was arranged that a number of gentlemen should officiate as chief mourners and pall-bearers. Sir George Smart expressed his intention to be present; and a letter was received by a member of the sub-committee from Mr. Bunn, the manager of the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane, stating that he would be present to pay the last mark of respect to the memory of the unfortunate deceased. The sub-committee made a request that those gentlemen who intended in either way to mark their sense of the unfortunate calamity, and their regret

for the loss which had been sustained, would notify their intention to the committee at the Town Hall before twelve o'clock on the following Friday. The committee met again on Thursday, and it was expected that they would shortly be prepared to give to the public a report on the circumstances connected with Madame Malibran's illness and death.

Several applications had been made at the Mosley Arms, by artists and others, to be allowed to take a sketch of the features, or to make a cast from the head and face of the deceased; but not one of these applications was granted: the instructions of M. de Beriot, in this respect, having been complied with to the letter. The body was placed in a leaden coffin on the Sunday night, and about ten o'clock on the following morning the lid was soldered down.

THE FUNERAL.

At eight o'clock on Saturday morning the tolling of the muffled bell at the Collegiate Church announced the preparations for the funeral. At that time several gentlemen who were to take part in the ceremony had assembled at the Mosley Arms. The main entrance of the hotel was, in deference to the ceremonials of the dead towards persons of distinction on the Continent, hung with black drapery, and fell in folds at each side of the door. At half-past nine the Rev. J. Crook, and the Rev. R. Firth, of St. Augustine's Chapel, in Granby Row, were admitted into the chamber where the body of Madame Malibran reposed, to perform the service of the Catholic Church. These gentlemen were followed by the mourners, and some of Mrs. Richardson's family. The body, enclosed in an oak shell, which was placed in a leaden coffin, and after-

wards in another solid oak coffin, covered with black cloth, was laid on the bed. An ivory crucifix was placed on the lid at the head of the coffin, and on each side was a wax light in silver branches. On the mantel-shelf were four other wax lights. The mourners and pall-bearers were then arranged at each side of the bed, and the Rev. Mr. Cook and the Rev. Mr. Firth stood at the foot, and read the office for the dead. The service commenced with the 129th Psalm and the 50th Psalm, which were read in Latin. These were followed by other portions of the service used on such occasions, in the course of which the ceremony of sprinkling the body was also performed.

The reverend gentlemen and the mourners then left the room, and arrangements were made for conveying the body to the church.

At half-past ten o'clock the hearse, drawn by four horses, was brought up to the door of the hotel. The body was then removed from the chamber in which it had lain, and carried by

six men to the hearse. The coffin, which was, as we stated before, composed of solid oak, was covered with handsome black cloth, and (as is the custom in Lancashire) had no other ornament than the black handles on each side, and at the head and foot. A brass plate, in the form of a shield on the lid, contained the following inscription, under the figure of the cross:—

MARIA FELICIA DE BERIOT.

DIED SEPTEMBER 23, 1836,

AGED 28 YEARS.

A similar brass plate, surmounted with the wings of the cherubim, and containing the same inscription, was placed at the back of the hearse.

Six mourning coaches, with four horses each, were then drawn up to the door of the hotel, and the mourners entered in the following order:—

In the first coach, Mr. Macvicar, the Boroughreeve of Manchester, as chief mourner, supported by the Earl of Wilton, and Sir George Smart.

In the second coach, Mr. Beale, Mr. Willert, Mr. Bunn of Drury Lane Theatre, and Mr. Brandt the barrister.

In the third coach, Mr. Shore, Mr. Joseph Ewart, Mr. Wright, and Mr. Shuttleworth.

In the fourth coach, Mr. Lot Gardiner, Mr. Bellhouse, and Mr. Withington, members of the Festival Committee.

In the fifth coach, Mr. Sharp, Mr. George Peel, and Mr. Hodgson, churchwardens of Manchester; and Mr. Joseph Peel, a magistrate.

In the sixth carriage, Mr. Wanklyn, treasurer of the Festival; Mr. Thomas Potter, a magistrate, and brother to the member for Wigan; Mr. Broadhurst, and Mr. S. Phillips, magistrates.

It was near eleven o'clock when the proces-

sion left the hotel, and it moved in the following order :

The Deputy Constable of Manchester, with a party of his men, their staves covered with black crape.

Two mutes with staves.

About sixty gentlemen of the town, dressed in deep mourning, and walking three abreast.

State-lid of feathers ;

The hearse, drawn by four beautiful black horses : the hearse also ornamented with feathers.

Six mourning coaches, each drawn by four horses, containing the mourners and pall-bearers : each carriage was attended by two men with black staves.

Then followed a long train of private carriages, among which were those of Earl Wilton, Mr. Mark Phillips, M.P.; Mr. Trafford of Trafford; Mr. Chadwick of Swinerton; Mr. Atherton; Mr. Fort of Sedgley; Mr. John Brooks, Mr. Hardman, Mr. Walfe, Mr. Edmund Bushley, Mrs. Richardson, Mr. Garnett, Mr. R. I. I. Harris, Mr. G. W. Wood,

late Member for Lancashire; Mr. Walker of Leicestershire, Mr. Thomas Potter, Mr. Heywood, &c.

The procession, in order to avoid the inconvenience of passing through the streets adjacent to the church on market-day, took the following route: Down Market-street, through St. Mary's-gate, over Blackfriars-bridge into Salford; through Greengate, over the Iron-bridge, which crosses the Irwell, and through Hunt's Bank to the church. Throughout the whole line, from the hotel to the church, an immense number of persons lined each side of the street, the whole of whom behaved in the most becoming and decent manner, and did not evince the slightest appearance of levity. At Salford the flag on the church steeple was hoisted half-mast high, and the muffled bell tolled in the most mournful manner. At the Collegiate Church the flag on the tower was also hoisted half-mast high. On the arrival of the procession at the sacred enclosure, the

gentlemen who preceded the hearse were joined by another numerous party of gentlemen, and formed themselves into a double line from the church-gates to the church, whilst the body, supported by the pall-bearers, and attended by the mourners, passed through them. The procession was met at the entrance by the Rev. C. D. Wray, the Rev. R. Parkinson, and the Rev. Mr. Marsden, with the choir in full robes. In this manner the procession entered the church, the pall supported by Mr. Phillips, Mr. Potter, Mr. Broadhurst, Mr. Sharp, Mr. Hodgson, Mr. G. Peel, Mr. Wanklyn, and Mr. Joseph Peel. The pall-bearers wore silk scarfs and hatbands, and the mourners were dressed in deep mourning with black crape scarfs and hatbands. The gentlemen who had preceded the body from the hotel followed the procession into the church. The pulpit and reading desks were hung with black cloth.

The church, at this period, presented a singularly mournful appearance. The galleries,

the aisle, and every spot from whence a view could be obtained, were crowded to excess by persons of highly respectable appearance, the greater part of whom were attired in mourning. As the body entered the door of the church, the organ commenced playing the "Dead March in Saul," and in a few moments the body of her who only ten days before delighted the thousands that had assembled under the same roof, was placed on the bier, in the centre aisle, a cold and inanimate corpse.

The burial service commenced by the 39th and 90th Psalms, which were chanted by the choir. The Rev. Mr. Wray then read the epistle taken from the 15th chapter of Corinthians, after which the choir sang, in a most affecting manner, an anthem from the Psalms that had been selected for the occasion. The beautiful air which Madame Malibran sang on Wednesday, "O Lord, have mercy upon me, for I am in trouble," was then played on the

organ, and recalled the recollection of the splendid talent which she displayed when she sang that piece to the audience. The body was then carried on the bier, preceded by the pall-bearers, through the church to the south aisle, where a grave was prepared for its reception. It appears that this grave originally belonged to a Fitzherbert family, and had not been opened for a period of fifty years, when (it was stated) a Catholic priest was interred. The grave was about five feet and a half deep. When the necessary arrangements were made, the mortal remains of Madame Malibran were lowered into the earth, and the service was read in a most impressive manner by the Rev. Mr. Wray. The mourners and other friends who surrounded the grave took a last look at the coffin, and with tears in their eyes retired from the spot. The thousands who were in the church then pressed forward to see the grave; and in order that they should have a perfect view of the coffin, candles were placed

at the head and foot, and the church-door having been thrown open, the immense multitude entered one way, and retired by another. The most perfect order prevailed throughout this proceeding, and not the slightest interruption or disturbance was made.

In the church were observed many of the leading merchants and other gentlemen in Manchester; and, mixed with the crowd, was also noticed Mr. Kean, the tragedian, who had been playing during the last week at Liverpool.

The funeral was conducted by Mr. Satterfield, of St. Ann's-square, Manchester.

As a mark of respect to Madame Malibran, the mourners attended service at the Collegiate Church on the following Sunday.

The rich and the poor, all the gradations of society, impelled by one common feeling—that of offering the tribute of their homage to departed greatness—thronged to witness the closing obsequies of Malibran. Many persons of

distinction were seen endeavouring to effect a passage through the crowd, offering heavy sums for seats, whence they might witness the noble and ennobling ceremonies performed over the mighty dead.

While a dense mass of spectators were collected around the consecrated spot, the solemnity of the scene was rendered more impressive by the breaking out of a tremendous storm. The rain poured down in heavy showers, more like buckets of water than rain-drops; but to the honour of Manchester it must be recorded, that not one man, however humble his station in life, was seen to put on his hat—they one and all remained uncovered. There was not a lady who, attaching a trivial and undue importance to her dress, attempted to put up her parasol, or to leave the melancholy scene in search of shelter—they stood their ground with as much patience and zeal as if it had been the finest day in summer : so enthralled were their

feelings by the deeply moving scene, that they appeared perfectly unconscious of the fearful, and not unappropriate commotion of the elements.

THIRD MEMOIR,

&c. &c.

NOTES, ANECDOTES, &c.

MADAME MALIBRAN'S RETURN FROM AMERICA, AND DEBUT AT PARIS.

During the season of 1827 and 1828, the performances of Mademoiselle Sontag attracted crowds to the Opera Italien in Paris. Mademoiselle Sontag was at that time the idol of the French public.

Whilst that charming singer was in the zenith of her popularity, Madame Malibran returned from New York. She sang at several

private parties. The tones of her voice excited wonder and admiration in the musical circles of Paris, and Madame Malibran became the engrossing topic of conversation.

Nevertheless, the directors of the Opera Buffa, deterred either by pecuniary considerations, or by the fear of placing too great vocalists in rivalry one to the other, allowed two months to elapse before they made any offer of engagement to Madame Malibran.

In the interim she availed herself of the opportunity afforded by Galli's benefit, which took place at the Grand Opera, and she made her *début* in the character of Semiramide. The success which attended that performance immediately procured for her an engagement at the Théâtre Italien. Otello was the opera chosen for her first appearance. Never did any singer produce so surprising an effect. The audience were enthusiastic in their applause. They knew not which most to admire, the singular power and extent of her voice, the

deep feeling and expression of her style, or her energetic and impassioned acting.

HER ACTING.

Such was the extraordinary impression produced by Madame Malibran's acting, that she seemed to have attained, as it were intuitively, that perfection which in Talma was the result of long years of study. Yet her acting was not, as many have supposed, the mere inspiration of the moment. Those who have heard Madame Malibran converse on the histrionic art, must be convinced that she made it a subject of profound reflection. Her father took her with him to Italy when she was scarcely four years of age, and consequently, in her earliest childhood, her thoughts and attention had been turned to the study of acting. Being endowed with quick intelligence, profound sensibility, and a peculiar facility for imitation, she appeared destined by nature to become an actress. Indeed the dramatic art was one of

the few things which Madame Malibran made an object of serious study.

Her gaiety was inexhaustible, and imparted animation and cheerfulness to all who surrounded her; but when her mind was occupied by the study of any new part, she applied herself to it with the most profound and abstracted attention. When on the stage, her efforts never for a single moment relaxed. She was excellent even in the most subordinate details of a character; she never allowed herself to be influenced by preferences for particular authors or composers, but entered heart and soul into the character she had to sustain.

Madame Malibran was once asked which was her favourite character?—Her answer was, "The character I may happen to be acting, whatever it may be."

VOICE AND STYLE OF SINGING.

Madame Malibran's voice embraced three complete octaves, extending from the contralto

D to the upper soprano D. There is no sound in nature which can convey any idea of her lower notes. Those who never heard her sing the romance in Otello,—those who never heard her soul-moving tones in that sublime phrase in the Capuletti, *Sul mio sasso*, have not felt the vibration of the tenderest chord of the heart.

Her voice, though sufficiently powerful to fill the spacious theatres of San Carlos and La Scala, was capable of executing with precision all the difficulties of vocal composition: ascending and descending scales, fiorituri, cadences, all were equally easy to her. She had not, like many other singers, a few favourite ornaments to introduce without distinction into every piece; her ornaments were always in perfect unison with the style of the music, with the meaning of the words, and with the dramatic situation of the character. Her style was light and graceful in the Opera Buffa, and grand in the serious opera; and every note she

introduced seemed to be an integral part of the piece to which they were adapted.

CHARACTER AND DISPOSITION.

Maria Malibran, by her noble and generous disposition, conciliated the esteem and attachment of all her operatic comrades. When she became acquainted with Mademoiselle Sontag, she found her no less distinguished for amiable feeling than for brilliant talent, and she conceived a cordial friendship for her. All who heard them sing together the duos in Semiramide and Tancredi, will remember the exquisite ornaments they introduced, and which owed their origin to the inventive fancy of Madame Malibran. Their voices seemed as though they had been created one for the other, and presented the *beau ideal* of perfect harmony. Their duos were the perfection of art, and were like the performance of one singer with two voices.

Envy had no place in the heart of Maria

Malibran. The success of her friends gratified her no less than her own success; and she was always ready to defend those who were the objects of severe criticism. She never sought to arrogate a superiority over others, by setting herself forward in prominent characters. In taking the secondary part of Zerlina in Don Giovanni, whilst Mademoiselle Sontag performed the character of Donna Anna, she gave a proof of the absence of that professional arrogance which ever accompanies mediocrity. The public fully appreciated this feeling; and every night reiterated rounds of applause obliged her to repeat the air *Batti, batti, bel Masetto.*

BENEVOLENCE.

Madame Malibran's greatest pleasure consisted in doing good. She was never so happy as when she had the opportunity of performing a benevolent action.

One day a child was presented to her as a

juvenile prodigy. She was at first struck with the imagination and genius indicated by the child; but his pale countenance denoted the exhaustion attendant on excessive labour. The boy was the child of poor parents, and he was the only support of his family. Madame Malibran was touched by the condition of the child, and called the father's attention to the state of his health. "We are poor, madame," was the father's reply, "and this child is our Providence." Next day the family received a hundred louis transmitted to them by an unknown hand, and they knew not the name of their benefactress till Madame Malibran was numbered with the dead.

TASTE FOR DRAMATIC AMUSEMENTS.

Madame Malibran sought in the drama itself a recreation from dramatic exertions. The theatre was her greatest source of enjoyment; and however mediocre a performance might be, it always afforded her some interest. She was

full of enthusiasm for the beautiful in art; and whilst she was anxious to render her tribute of admiration to the talents of her professional colleagues, she was ever indulgent to mediocrity. When present at any dramatic performance, she directed her attention exclusively to the business of the stage; her eyes and ears were riveted on what she saw and heard; and she could never be induced to leave her box till the fall of the curtain.

CONCERT FOR THE BENEFIT OF THE POOR AT CALAIS.

In April, 1830, Madame Malibran, on her way from Paris to London, stopped in Calais for the purpose of giving a concert for the benefit of the poor in that city. It was proposed that the concert should take place in the rooms of the Philharmonic Society, but they were found to be too small. It was suggested by Madame Malibran that the performance should take place in the theatre, which was

calculated to accommodate a more numerous audience, and consequently to ensure larger receipts for the objects of the charity. Madame Malibran's wish was complied with, and in a few hours all the necessary arrangements were completed. On her entrance she was greeted by the most rapturous applause. She sang three times in the first part of the concert, and at its conclusion she went round to the principal boxes, conducted by the president of the Philharmonic Society, to collect a subscription for the charity. It is impossible to describe the fascinating grace with which she acquitted herself of this benevolent task.

KING'S THEATRE, 1830.

During the season of 1830, Madame Malibran performed at the King's Theatre. The impression she produced must be fresh in the recollection of many who peruse these pages; it is amply described in the London journals of the time. After two years, divided between

Paris and London, her reputation was established throughout Europe. But amidst these triumphs—whilst surrounded by popular homage and admiration—Maria Malibran was not happy. From the end of the year, 1830, Madame Malibran and De Beriot never separated. They visited together the principal cities of Italy, France, and England.

DEPARTURE FOR ITALY IN 1832.

About the month of May, 1832, when the cholera had made its way to Paris, Lablache left England to proceed to Italy. With the view of avoiding the *cordons sanitaires*, which were established along the French frontier, he determined to pass through Belgium, and take the route of the Rhine. In Brussels he saw Madame Malibran and De Beriot, and jokingly proposed that they should accompany him to Naples, never imagining that they would seriously think of such a thing. To his surprise they agreed to go. In the course of a few

hours their travelling preparations were completed, and they were on their road to Italy with Lablache and his family. In the hurry of their departure they neglected the observance of a very essential formality in obtaining their passports, viz. the sanction of the Austrian ambassador. There was, it is true, at that time, no Austrian legation in Brussels, but that reason was not deemed sufficient by the authorities of Lombardy. The consequence was, that Madame Malibran and De Beriot were obliged to stop at Chiavenna for three days, at the expiration of which time Lablache sent them, from Milan, an express with the governor's orders for allowing them to proceed without further obstacle.

MADAME MALIBRAN'S DEBUT AT ROME IN 1832.

On her arrival in Milan, she was invited to several private parties given by the governor and Duke Visconti. Madame Malibran and her travelling companions remained only twelve

days at Milan, and then proceeded to Rome, where she performed six times. It may be possible to convey an idea of a musical triumph in France or in England; but the enthusiasm of popular feeling excited on similar occasions in Italy can only be conceived by those who have witnessed it—it was a frenzy, a delirium.

At Rome, the censorship wished to mutilate the libretto of Otello, by striking out certain words and phrases, especially the passage delivered by Desdemona's father, beginning *Ti maledico.* But Madame Malibran at once saw and disapproved the absurdity of cancelling a passage on which the whole meaning and interest of the scene depend. She positively refused to sing, except on condition of the opera being performed without curtailment; and at length the censor was obliged to yield the point. This fact was the more extraordinary in a country in which the rigour of the public authorities is extreme, and in

which every one obeys them without a murmur.

DEATH OF GARCIA.

Whilst she was in Rome, and in the midst of her triumphs, Madame Malibran received intelligence of the death of her father—he who had at once been her master and her model. At the moment when the fatal news was communicated to her, she was at a rehearsal;—she fainted, and it was found necessary to convey her home immediately. But the performance for the following evening had been announced, and that sad necessity which belongs to the profession of an actress, obliged her to appear on the stage, and to go through her part, whilst suffering under the most painful state of feeling.

NAPLES IN THE SEASON OF 1832.

About the beginning of August, 1832, Madame Malibran made her *début* at Naples. For

a time she had to struggle against some petty intrigues, which, however, her talent speedily subdued. The following remarks on the acting of Madame Malibran, especially her performance of Desdemona, are from the pen of a distinguished Italian critic.

" The powerful impression she produces, has its origin in her extreme sensibility. It is impossible to impart either to air or recitative a more true and impassioned expression. It is impossible to conceive more dramatic action or more eloquent silence.

" There is always some appearance of vanity in manifesting one's own sensations, that is to say, when they appertain exclusively to one's self. But we are sure to find numerous echoes, when our sensations are produced by rare and predominant talent. The individual then disappears, and the actress alone remains. We eagerly receive every impression of which she is the exciting cause ;—our own become insufficient, and we seek those of others in order to

increase the pleasure and prolong its power. These are the only circumstances under which we listen with indulgence to those who depict what they feel. Such is the influence of superior talent,—talent which is the offspring of nature, rather than of study. The spectator is indifferent when he knows beforehand the gesture and attitude which the performer is about to assume: he looks on without enthusiasm, and no longer identifies himself with the character represented.

"But when a dramatic performer combines with impassioned acting the charms of a fine voice and a beautiful person, we may justly pronounce it to be perfection. This perfection is found in Madame Malibran.

"I imagined that I had experienced every emotion I could possibly be excited to by the representation of the beautiful and sublime opera of Otello; but I was mistaken. It remained for Madame Malibran to awaken the most susceptible chord in my heart. Her

first entrance on the stage sufficiently denotes the powerful effect she is capable of producing:—

"'Même quand l'oiseau marche, on voit qu'il a des ailes.'"

"What an easy and graceful deportment! what pliancy in all her movements! The illusion is complete. It is not Madame Malibran singing to the audience; it is Desdemona herself pouring forth her plaintive strains. A feeling of lassitude creeps over our senses when she says:—

"'Il rigor d' avverso fato sono stanca di soffrir.'"

"Then again in the duo, after being wholly imbued with a sentiment that seemed to her like celestial bliss, she suddenly draws aside the flattering veil, and exclaims:—

"'Quanto son frizi i palpiti che desta in noi l' amore!'"

"In the finale of the first act, with what a happy union of dignity and submission she follows her father! With what an angelic ex-

pression she addresses to him the question whether he wishes her to accept the hand of Rodrigo! How she imposes silence on the latter, and with what contemptuous indifference she hears his declaration! Strong in her love for Otello, she stands like a rock against which the angry waves vainly beat. How overpowering is her terror when she sees her lover enter! The expression of her countenance at that moment tells the story of the whole opera. In what a tone of touching *naïveté* she tells her father that she has promised to wed the African warrior. She feels all the misery to which this confession exposes her;—but no matter, she summons resolution to brave it all. Nevertheless, her father's curse wrings from her a cry of horror which thrills the heart of every hearer. Madame Malibran closes the first act in the same exquisite style in which she commences it.

"As to the second act, the effect it produces is wholly due to the genius of Madame Mali-

bran. The anxiety betrayed in her whole deportment when she enters—the glance of disdain which she casts at Rodrigo—her expressions of solicitude and affection for Otello, on whom she keeps her eyes stedfastly fixed—all are convincing proofs of her innocence. If she were seconded by an actor fully imbued with the spirit of his part, he might, with a single word, give the finishing stroke of perfection to this scene. Desdemona swoons, and recovers only to feel in its full force the horror of her position. She addresses the chorus with earnest inquietude, questions each individual with gestures and looks. Her anguish becomes almost painful to the spectator. At length, after an interval of suspense, the word *vive* is pronounced. What a sudden transition —what a celestial expression beams on the countenance of Madame Malibran! Like a flower which droops its head beneath the sun's too powerful rays, until revived by the refreshing dews of evening—so Madame Malibran, at

the word *vive*, rises and advances across the stage with a rapidity inspired by the emotion which pervades her whole being. This is sublime! It is the finest point throughout the whole of the part. It is the triumph of art, and a triumph the more complete, inasmuch as art is perfectly concealed in the guise of simple nature. The divine expressions of her countenance cannot be described; but the soul-kindled glance, the look of delight, are immediately repressed at the sight of her father! Her joy is succeeded by a deep melancholy. How touching are the tones of her voice when she utters the phrase, "*Se il Padre m'abbandona!*"

"Poor Desdemona reappears in the last act, with that air of placid sadness which never again forsakes her. She casts her eyes around her, and gazes at every object with indifference. Misery is depicted in every gesture. She received the attentions of her friend, rather from affability than from the hope that they can convey to her any consolation. She feels

the presentiment of her approaching death. This is evidently betrayed when she hears the song of the gondolier, who is about to return to his family. She despairs of ever again seeing her beloved. She casts down her head! What magical effect does Madame Malibran produce by that simple and natural gesture!

"During the storm, she fancies that the noise is occasioned by some one entering her apartment; and this idea is so eloquently expressed by her movements, that it is for a moment communicated to the spectator; and her restored tranquillity, when she discovers that imagination alone has deceived her, gives a peculiar reflection to the tones of her voice, as she utters the words, '*Come il ciel s'unisce a miei lamenti.*' Her attitude, when at her lyre, is a study for an artist.

"What can be more touching than her manner of taking leave of her friend? The door closes; she implores Heaven to grant her repose. In the last duo, Madame Malibran

is perfectly electrifying. Her joy on beholding Otello, and her horror at perceiving the dagger, and then her sudden rush towards him, imploring him to plunge it into her bosom—all are the perfections of grace and truth to nature. There is no appearance of force or study. Every movement appears to spring from the inspiration of the moment, and this is the secret of Madame Malibran's captivating power. When she exclaims to Otello, '*E un vile e un traditore*,' her accent excites a thrill of indignation against the monster Iago. To the close —to the last moment of the death-scene, Madame Malibran evinces a divine conception of the part, accompanied by inimitable action, and extraordinary musical power. Never before was such versatility of talent combined in any operatic performer."

BOLOGNA, 1832.

Madame Malibran, accompanied by De Beriot, departed about the end of September for

Bologna, where she was engaged for twenty performances. Some idea of the extraordinary admiration she excited in the last-mentioned place, may be gathered from the following remarks. They are extracted from a letter dated Bologna.

"It is midnight. The performance at the theatre is just ended. I have just returned home, proud of the impression which Madame Malibran has produced. I never saw an audience so enthusiastic: Madame Malibran was recalled twenty-four times. The approbation was kept up for more than an hour, and during the whole time wreaths of laurel and *immortelles*, which had been brought expressly from Florence, were thrown on the stage. These wreaths were accompanied by slips of paper, on which were inscribed sonnets and odes. In short, such rapturous admiration was never before manifested at Bologna. The inhabitants of that city, who are so remarkable for taste and intelligence, rendered the fullest homage to the

talents of the distinguished cantatrice, and on the same evening they inaugurated her bust in marble, which is placed in the entrance of the theatre."

This was Madame Malibran's last performance in Bologna. When she left the theatre the people ranged themselves in rows, on either side of the streets through which she had to pass, and saluted her with shouts of approbation. On her arrival at her hotel, a crowd collected beneath her windows, and could not be prevailed on to disperse until she had shown herself in the balcony.

After four hours rest, Madame Malibran set off on her journey to Paris and Brussels.

She left Brussels for London in the spring of 1833, to fulfil her engagement at Drury Lane.

ENGAGEMENT AT DRURY LANE THEATRE.

Madame Malibran was engaged to perform twenty nights at Drury Lane Theatre in the

season of 1833. The opera made choice of for her first appearance, and which for that purpose was translated into English, was Bellini's Sonnambula. She next appeared in Beethoven's Fidelio, and subsequently in an opera by Chelard, composed expressly for her.

MADAME MALIBRAN'S FACILITY IN THE ACQUISITION OF LANGUAGES.

Madame Malibran could speak fluently French, English, Italian, and Spanish. Her conversation was replete with imagination, originality, and grace. When in rapid conversation her vivacity carried her away, and she could not immediately recollect a particular word in the language she happened to be speaking, she would immediately resort to another language for a term to express her meaning. One day in the warmth of an animated discussion, a friend remarked that her language was party-coloured, like harle-

quin's suit. "True," she replied, "it is party-coloured like harlequin, but not masked."

ENGAGEMENTS IN ENGLAND AND NAPLES.

In 1833 Madame Malibran and De Beriot were engaged in England to perform at the three grand music meetings at Norwich, Worcester, and Liverpool.

At the termination of the three festivals they departed for Naples, where Madame Malibran had an engagement which was likely to detain her for four months in that city. Norma was the favourite opera of the season, and in that piece Malibran's talents shone with renewed lustre. In the favourite trio, her manner of giving the passage, "*Ah non tremar*" was truly sublime; and in the duo, "*In mia man affin tu sei*," she made the theatre resound with applause. Norma was the opera chosen for the closing performance of the season. Never was Neapolitan enthusiasm so highly excited. Madame Malibran was called upon

the stage no less than twenty successive times at the close of the opera. On her departure from the theatre, all the performers of the orchestra waited at the door to render homage to her; and she was conducted to her hotel amidst the acclamations of the public.

During her stay at Naples, she received proposals from the managers of the Académie Royale and the Italian Opera at New York: and though the terms offered were on the most liberal scale, they were declined. She entered into negotiation with a society of Dilettanti, then forming at Naples, for the purpose of making such arrangements as would tend to confer increased splendour on opera performances.

ENGAGEMENT AT MILAN.

On leaving Naples, De Beriot and Madame Malibran proceeded to Bologna, giving several concerts on their way. From Bologna they repaired to Milan, where Madame Malibran

had been impatiently looked for during several preceding seasons. This arrival there was an event which will never be forgotten by the Milanese, who felt such an earnest desire to see and hear her, that Duke Visconti, the Impresario of La Scala, was compelled to engage her. It was well known that the obstacles in the way of Madame Malibran's engagement rested with Duke Visconti alone, and whenever he showed himself in his box at La Scala, he was received with such marks of public disapproval, that he found himself in some sort forced to conclude an engagement with Madame Malibran. Indeed, an association had been formed for the purpose of opposing Duke Visconti. They proposed to take another theatre, and engage Madame Malibran: two agents were despatched to Bologna for that purpose, but Duke Visconti's agent made the first application, and concluded an engagement with Madame Malibran for a few performances. This brief engagement was the prelude to a

contract for several years, which was signed shortly afterwards.

THE PASTISTS.

On Madame Malibran's arrival at Milan, the supporters of Madame Pasta, or, as they were termed, the *Pastists*, organised a sort of cabal against her, on the alleged ground that she had given proofs of vanity and pretension in selecting the character of Norma for her *début*. In Norma, Madame Pasta's talent had shone with most conspicuous lustre; and Madame Malibran would fain have changed the piece selected for her *début*, for she was hurt at the thought of offending Madame Pasta, towards whom she never cherished any other feelings than admiration and esteem. But unluckily all the arrangements for her appearance had been hurriedly made at Bologna, and it was impossible to alter them. Norma had been formally announced; and in Italy a printed opera bill is regarded as a solemn pledge between the

people and the government; it is considered inviolable, and is maintained with scrupulous exactitude.

It may naturally be imagined that this little preliminary warfare between the friends of the prima donnas tended not a little to excite curiosity; but, at the same time, the unfriendly feeling of one portion of the public necessarily augmented the risks and difficulties she had to surmount. Poor Maria! she was fully aware of the critical position in which she stood; she knew that she would be judged severely by the sovereign public of Italy, and these thoughts left her not a moment's repose. The uneasiness she suffered can only be understood by the artist who has felt the anxiety of a *début*, on which the maintenance of a high reputation depends. It is only mediocrity that nurses itself in the full confidence of success. The artist of real genius always feels the necessity of increased exertion; and on the day of her *début* at Milan, Maria Malibran thought within

herself, "This evening I must be sublime, otherwise the reputation I have carried as it were by chance, will all vanish in a moment."

DEBUT AT LA SCALA.

On the day of Madame Malibran's *début* at Milan, the pit was filled as early as two o'clock in the afternoon.

When she entered her *camerino* to dress for her part, Madame Malibran was so overcome by her feelings that she burst into a flood of tears.

Meanwhile, the hour for the commmencement of the performance arrived. The buz of impatience which had for some time circulated among the Dilettanti in the pit, changed to a tumult of approbation when the *ritornella* announced the entrance of Madame Malibran. The first tones of her voice produced a strong excitement. Throughout, the audience manifested their approbation only by a sort of mur-

mur, indicative of their fear of losing a note or syllable which fell from the *Cantanta Divina ;* but when she came to the terzetto *Ah non tremar !* she was interrupted by a torrent of applause. It was called for a second time, and Madame Malibran repeated it with an accent and an expression which will never be effaced from the memory of the Milanese.

HONOURS RENDERED TO MADAME MALIBRAN ON HER DEPARTURE FROM MILAN.

The operatic annals of no country present any example of a triumph similar to that enjoyed by Madame Malibran, on the evening of her first performance at Milan. At the conclusion of the opera she was recalled no less than thirty times ; and each time wreaths, bouquets, trinkets, and sonnets, were thrown on the stage. When she returned home, she found the gardens of Visconti Palace, where she resided, brilliantly illuminated. A triumphal arch, with a complimentary inscription,

was erected at the entrance of the principal avenue. Upwards of twenty thousand persons assembled round the palace, and the orchestra and chorus of the opera performed a cantata, composed for the occasion by Madame Panizza. Madame Malibran's feelings were quite overpowered by these marks of favour. She repeatedly went into her balcony, and by graceful and expressive gestures thanked her numerous admirers.

VISIT TO LONDON IN 1834.

Madame Malibran and De Beriot left Milan for Paris and Brussels, and from the latter place proceeded to London, where they arrived in June 1834. The object of their visit to London was to assist at the concert of M. Manuel Garcia, the brother of Madame Malibran. This concert took place at the residence of Mrs. Caruther, in Grafton-street.

RETURN TO ITALY.

After passing a few days in London, Madame Malibran and her husband returned to Italy, having engagements to fulfil in Sinagaglia, Lucca, Milan, and Naples. They travelled rapidly, and reached Sinagaglia on the 14th of July. Madame Malibran now enjoyed a colossal reputation throughout Italy. She was treated with the honour due to a princess. In every little town or village through which she passed, crowds pressed round her carriage to get a sight of her.

Old Cardinal Albani was a rapturous admirer of the talent of Madame Malibran, and he used even to attend the opera rehearsals.

DEPARTURE FOR LUCCA IN AUGUST 1834.

On the 11th of August 1834, Madame Malibran left Sinagaglia for Lucca. She had

now become the idol of Italy, and nothing was thought of or talked about, but the *Cantanta Divina*. The enthusiasm she excited was such, as can exist only among a people who, like the Italians, are deprived of commercial and political excitement, and to whom every species of occupation and amusement, save those derived from the fine arts, is limited or prohibited.

The Italians, whose political feelings and enthusiasm are repressed by the yoke of a foreign domination, turns to the charms of music and poetry for resource and consolation.

At Lucca, Madame Malibran was received with the same *furore* as at Milan and Bologna. On the last evening of her performance, the people unharnessed the horses from her carriage, and drew her home in triumph.

She afterwards returned to Milan, where she performed twelve evenings. On this occasion she entered into an engagement with

Duke Visconti for about one hundred and eighty performances, at the rate of two thousand five hundred francs each.

ACCIDENT AT NAPLES.

Madame Malibran once more left Milan, and repaired to Naples, where she concluded an engagement with the Operatic Society, which had just then been established in that city. Her performances at San Carlos were a renewed series of triumphs, and to describe them would only be a repetition of what has already been said. One circumstance, however, which occurred during Madame Malibran's visit to Naples on this occasion, deserves to be noticed. During the festivities of the carnival, as Madame Malibran was driving along the street of Toledo in an open carriage, her horses unfortunately took fright, and she was thrown out of the vehicle. By this accident she suffered a dislocation of the right wrist, and her performances were in conse-

quence, for a few nights, suspended; and when she again appeared she had her arm in a sling. It is a proof of her singular talent and address, that she so effectually concealed the disablement of her right arm, that scarcely any of the audience, who were not previously aware of her accident, perceived it.

VISIT TO VENICE—DEATH OF THE EMPEROR FRANCIS.

On the 4th of March, 1835, the Neapolitan season having closed, Madame Malibran and De Beriot proceeded to Venice.

When they arrived at Bologna, the intelligence of the death of the Emperor Francis retarded for several weeks the six performances for which Madame Malibran was engaged at Venice.

As her gondola approached the city of the doges, bands of music announced her coming. Immense crowds of persons lined the quays. When Madame Malibran attempted to cross

the Place of St. Mark, the crowd became so dense that she was induced to seek refuge in the church. But the church itself was speedily filled, and it was with difficulty that she could make her way through the crowded streets of Venice to her hotel.

At Venice she played in Otello, Cenerentola, and Norma, and she concluded her performances by an act of benevolence. She played the Sonnambula for the benefit of a poor impresario, who on that occasion opened a theatre, which now bears the name of the *Teatro Malibran.*

MADAME MALIBRAN'S APPEARANCE IN INEZ DE CASTRO—PRESENT FROM THE DUKE OF LUCCA.

At the close of their engagements in Venice, Madame Malibran and De Beriot returned to Paris, and from thence proceeded to Brussels, where they remained a fortnight. They next visited London for the musical season of 1835. At its close they again departed for Italy.

Madame Malibran appeared at Lucca as the heroine of Persiani's opera of Inez de Castro. The Duke of Lucca was so charmed by her performance of this character, that he presented to her a magnificent brooch set with fine pearls and brilliants, and in the letter which accompanied the gift, expressed not only admiration of her talent, but sincere esteem for her character.

THE CHOLERA IN ITALY.

Madame Malibran was in the midst of her triumphs when the cholera broke out: first at Genoa, next at Leghorn, then at Florence. Terror spread rapidly. The theatres and all places of amusement were deserted, and *cordons sanitaires* were established on all points, except on the road to Carrara, which was less frequented than the rest. Madame Malibran was expected at Milan in fulfilment of her engagements; she therefore formed the resolution of travelling by a path leading across the

Alps, to avoid entering Genoa, where the cholera was raging, and where they would have been detained by a quarantine of twenty days.

On arriving at Carrara, they hired twenty-five men, eight oxen, and six mules, to convey two carriages across the Apennines. They advanced only nine miles in the space of two days, having to pass ravines, torrents, and pointed rocks, and sometimes to make their way through villages, whose narrow streets scarcely afforded sufficient space for a carriage. They encountered indescribable difficulties.

Madame Malibran rode on horseback a little in advance of the cavalcade; and nothing could exceed the courage and spirit with which she bore the perils and fatigues of the journey. They were escorted by a civic guard, which constantly kept within a hundred paces of the carriages. They reached Milan in the beginning of September 1835, having by their weary and perilous journey succeeded in avoiding those *cordons sanitaires.*

DONIZETTI'S MARIA STUARDO.

Madame Malibran appeared at Milan in Donizetti's opera of Maria Stuardo. This piece was prohibited after the third performance, on account of some political allusions, to which Madame Malibran imparted twofold effect by her emphatic manner of delivering them.

During this visit to Milan, a celebrated Italian sculptor executed a marble bust of Madame Malibran. The artist was engaged upon it for several months, but he finally succeeded in producing a striking resemblance. This bust is now at Ixelles.

MARRIAGE OF MADAME MALIBRAN AND DE BERIOT.

In the spring they left Milan to return to Paris, where they were united in marriage on the 29th of March. The witnesses of the mar-

riage ceremony, were the Marquis de Louvois Baron Perignon, MM. Auber and Troupenas. The newly-married couple spent the evening at the residence of M. Troupenas, where a party was invited to meet them, consisting of the most distinguished musical professors and amateurs then in the French capital. Madame de Beriot sang the finale from the Sonnambula, with a degree of animation which was very naturally inspired by the increased happiness of her position. De Beriot, too, contributed not a little to the charms of the evening's entertainments by his exquisite performance of several of his favourite pieces. In short, this delightful concert, together with the happy event in honour of which it was given, will never be effaced from the recollection of those who were present at it.

VISIT TO BRUSSELS—SERENADES—CONCERTS.

On the day after their marriage, M. and Madame de Beriot left Paris for Brussels,

where they spent several days in the bosom of their family.

When they arrived at their villa at Ixelles, several serenades were performed in honour of them: one by the band of the regiment of Royal Guards, another by the orchestra of the Harmonic Society, and a third by the Vocal Society. All were eager to testify their feelings of satisfaction at the union of two persons who seemed perfectly formed to render each other happy.

During their short stay at Brussels, M. and Madame de Beriot devoted their talents to the service of humanity, by giving a concert for the benefit of the Polish refugees. There being no concert-room at Brussels sufficiently spacious for the purpose, the performance took place in the church of the Augustines, which was likewise much too small for the numbers who attended.

Some evenings afterwards, in compliance with the public wish, they gave a concert at the

great theatre. It was exceedingly crowded; the public of Brussels being anxious, not only to enjoy the pleasure of hearing their delightful performances, but also to mark their admiration of the generous aid they had rendered to the poor Polish exiles. They were greeted with the most enthusiastic plaudits, and were even escorted to their carriage amidst shouts of *bravo!* Such a feeling of excitement was never witnessed on any similar occasion in Brussels.

SHORT VISIT TO LONDON—MADAME MALIBRAN'S FALL FROM HER HORSE — CONSEQUENT ILLNESS.

About the end of April, Madame Malibran and her husband again visited London, and returned to Brussels at the end of July. It was during that interval that Madame Malibran had the misfortune to fall from her horse On her return to Brussels, Madame Malibran

bore on her countenance the marks of the contusions she had received; and the state of her health altogether, excited uneasiness in the minds of her friends. The only cause assigned by Madame Malibran for the contusions she had received was, that she had fallen down stairs, in consequence of her foot having become entangled in her riding-habit.

Unfavourable symptoms soon began to show themselves. Her temper became irritable, and she was frequently melancholy. When roused from the fits of depression, her gaiety seemed to be the result of excitement rather than of cheerfulness. Her condition gave serious alarm to her family, whose fears were, however, somewhat allayed by the idea that her pregnancy might possibly be the cause of the alteration observable in her. Two medical professors, who were in attendance on her, concurred in the propriety of bleeding her. After the bleeding, she certainly became less excitable, and appeared to enjoy improved health.

On the 12th of October, Madame Malibran accompanied her husband to Liege, where he was engaged to perform. Whilst Madame Malibran was listening to De Beriot's performance on this occasion, her feelings were moved in a degree scarcely to be expected, considering that she was in the constant habit of hearing him.

A few days afterwards they gave another concert, at which Madame Malibran sang the romance of The Brigand, which she had just then composed. She sang it with such deep and impassioned expression, that at its conclusion the whole of the audience in the pit rose *en masse* to applaud her.

PERFORMANCE AT AIX-LA-CHAPELLE.

A deputation was sent by the inhabitants of Aix-la-Chapelle to request that Madame Malibran and De Beriot would perform in that city. There was only a German opera company at

Aix-la-Chapelle; but Madame Malibran made an innovation which was crowned with success. She sang her part in Bellini's Sonnambula in Italian, whilst the other performers sang their parts in German. Madame Malibran was never heard to greater advantage than on this occasion. Every time she appeared on the stage, she was saluted by a flourish from a military band stationed in the orchestra, and the same honour was rendered to De Beriot.

The Sonnambula was performed a second time, in compliance with the urgent wish of the public. Madame Malibran was exceedingly ill and low-spirited on the evening of this second performance. It seemed as though she felt a presentiment that it was the close of her operatic triumphs.

MADAME MALIBRAN'S RETURN TO IXELLES—HER EXTRAORDINARY PASSION FOR MUSICAL COMPOSITION—DEPARTURE FOR THE MANCHESTER MUSIC MEETING.

From Aix-la-Chapelle Madame Malibran and De Beriot returned to Ixelles, where they remained two days. They then proceeded to Lille, where arrangements had been made for a concert; on the morning after which they set off for Roissy, an estate about seven leagues from Paris, which they had recently purchased. On her arrival at Roissy, Madame Malibran's love for musical composition became almost a mania. She sat constantly at her piano, from which she could not be roused, either by the solicitations of her husband, or by the desire of seeing the beautiful domain of Roissy, which she now visited for the first time. Her head and her mind needed repose, and for this reason De Beriot had prevailed on her to pass a short time at Roissy. Her

husband thought the pure air would speedily restore her to health; but, instead of enjoying the country and seeking healthful recreation, she devoted herself assiduously to her musical compositions. At Roissy she composed her last romances.

After a short time, Madame Malibran proceeded to England, to fulfil her engagement at the Manchester music meeting.

LETTERS.

LETTERS.

[The following are translations of selected parts of Madame Malibran's correspondence.]

TO MONSIEUR LE BARON D——.

You must have been fully aware that I did not refuse you admittance to-day. You perhaps know I went straight from rehearsal to dine at mamma's, and from thence came home at half-past eight, and retired to bed directly. I was so amused, I was really fearful of drinking

too deeply of the cup of pleasure at one time. I therefore was determined to mortify myself . . . . . You see me in imagination casting down my eyes . . . . . You go doubtlessly to-morrow (or rather I should say to-day) to the concert? . . . . . Who, I wonder, will come and ask me to have the goodness to sing? . . . . . Upon my word, if no one does me that favour, I shall coolly get up and go and . . . . . place myself at the piano, and consent to sing, in order to please the unanimous desire of . . . . . myself! What do you think of this plan? I think it's something new.

One thing is certain, my follies are nothing new to you: unfortunately you are well accustomed to them. You, who are Mister Useful, do you believe, that if I put on a dress, such as the one I wore with the cap, or if I—or else if . . . . . Well, what do you think?

You are a second Madame Rossi, as a critic of the toilette. Now don't advise me as Iago

does . . . . . Adieu, you may come in the guise of a letter, and see me this morning.

M. F. Malibran.

TO THE SAME.

Having to attend a grand rehearsal to-day I cannot receive you at one. I must put it off till half-past three. You, I think, must be content with me. *I* am highly so with *myself.*

My whole being feels improved by the quiet life I have led for the last three days. Nothing has vexed or annoyed me. My voice is much fresher. I will not, however, go so far as to say that I have slept well. No; I have been agitated all night. But what is this compared to eternity? I must, however, descend from Olympus, and I'll tell you why; I must go and dress for rehearsal.

Madame de Merlin is very good to come and

see me to-day. I shall receive her with open arms. I will not utter the slightest reproach, but load her with kindness. Such is my vengeance. You recollect what La Cenerentola says, "E sara mia vendetta . . . . . il lor . . . . . perdona."

If you were the audience, you'd say "Bravo!"

M. F. Malibran presents her affectionate compliments to the "Good Devil."

TO THE SAME.

Calais, 10th April, 1830. Ten o'clock at night.

No power shall withhold me, no pain shall deter me; in a word, nothing on earth shall prevent me from writing to my dear friend P——. . . . . Friend P——, my excellent friend, you must be fully conscious that if you were deceitful, (which I am sure you are not,) you would be the most dangerous person in the world, for you possess the most

extraordinary powers of persuasion. You have a way of saying things which carries conviction with it; every word which falls from you is implicitly believed by him or her to whom it is addressed. If a person, or rather I should say, if I had met with a person who had possessed your character, I should have become mad, raving mad, long ago.

Let us turn to another subject. I like you: such is the first feeling which emanates from my heart when I think of you.

I slept well all night, with my feet in Madame L——'s lap, stretched out as comfortably as if I had been in bed. They tell me we shall have a fine day to-morrow for my voyage to Dover. Heaven grant it.

Take great care of yourself; don't fatigue yourself too much; remember you are "*indispensable*" to your friends, and that to me you are *absolutely necessary*; one only meets twice, or rather I should say once, at most, a being like yourself; who can understand and sympathise,

—who can feel for another, — who can put up with self-denial, and who can console and pour a balm into the agitated bosom of affliction. How often have I felt this, and . . .

. . . . . .

. . . . . .

My sermon's done.

Let me know all: you understand. Heaven knows whether you will decipher the nonsense I have scribbled. My arm is painful. I am going to bed. Let me know whether I am to execute any commissions for you.

Have you forgotten anything which I can do to serve you?

There is one thing certain, a letter will always find me if addressed to me in London, where I shall remain for some time anxiously expecting to hear from you, and ever ready to prove how truly I am your devoted

MARIA.

TO THE SAME.

Calais, April 11th, 1830.

I have not yet started; the weather was so tempestuous, I did not choose to risk my *bones*. To-morrow will perhaps be finer, but whether it is so or not, I shall not start, as I have promised to remain to sing at a charity subscription concert, on condition I should be allowed to go round and make a collection; for this reason I trust no one will come without money in their pockets. The poor, I hope, will not lose by this arrangement. The delay is of no great consequence, as I am in no hurry, having nothing to do just yet in London.

Calais, Monday.

It is splendid weather,—just the weather for *riding* over the earth, or over the sea. But to go to Dover: bah! this evening the concert

is to take place. We shall have a good laugh. I'll write to you all about it. The president is coming in due form to thank me for my proposed exertions.

Last night we had at the hotel M—— the very questionable pleasure of hearing a singer. I beg her pardon, a *cantatrice!* (I should say of the streets,) who was brought to the hotel by some English people for the purpose of regaling their ears with sweet music. Their door was just opposite to mine. Two ladies, who had come expressly to *hear* her, were shown into my room by mistake. So I instantly sat down to the piano, and played the accompaniment to the song which the beautiful syren was at that moment singing; the effect was very odd. To her it seemed like a distant echo, to me it appeared like the squalling of a tortured cat. This brought to my recollection certain scenes of old, which contrasted strangely in my mind's eye. Adieu till the evening, when I will again take up my pen, and tell

you everything which can possibly interest you.

I promised to write. Well, I must inform you, in the first place, that my name had such an effect upon the Calaisians, that the directors of the proposed subscription concert found it would be advantageous to admit all who chose to come; so at two o'clock to-day it was announced that a "Public concert for the benefit of the poor would take place this evening at the theatre, when a collection would be made by Madame Malibran."

Poor creatures! I understand they have suffered dreadfully. I am delighted to think I have the power of doing them good. Good-bye till after the concert.

I have just come in—you would have been delighted to see my reception. The good people of this place are in ecstasies. At eight o'clock I was at my post. Extraordinary to say, that though the concert was only announced publicly at *two* o'clock, I succeeded in

collecting three hundred and eighty-seven francs, over and above what was taken at the doors—an enormous sum, considering all things.

After the first act I went round. As soon as I had done this, the mayor came on the stage, and having made really a very good speech before the whole audience, he crowned me with a wreath of flowers—gave me a bouquet—delivered a second complimentary address, and ended by reading out aloud some verses which had been written in my honour. After all this, the people began to applaud in the most vociferous manner for several minutes, and invoked all sorts of blessings on my head. So enthusiastic were they, that they cheered me all the way home. Adieu; if it is not fine, I shall not embark to-morrow.

Tuesday morning.

I don't start to-day; the weather is still too stormy. They are, however, determined I shall not find my sojourn dull. I am asked to a

soirée at M. Pigault de Beauprés (cousin to Pigault-le-Brun) this evening. We shall have dancing, in which I hope to join. I promise you not to fatigue myself, and to return home just as early as if I expected to meet . . . . . You see I don't forget your friends. I am dying to arrive in London, where I expect to find letters from you. I hope to go by to-morrow's mail packet-boat. I close my letter, having nothing but the *old story* to tell you. But stay—I will write no more stuff.

Good bye,

My best, my sincerest friend.

TO THE SAME.

Bristol, on my way to Exeter.

We start to-morrow morning for Exeter, my dear M. D., where I am engaged for eight concerts, including those which I am to give, on my way back, at Bath and Bristol. On the

29th we shall be *en route* for Paris; on the 26th we shall be at Calais. Pray send me a letter addressed "Hotel Meurice," wherein (after saying all those pretty little things you so well understand) you must tell me the name of the street, and the number of the house, &c. &c., that you have had the goodness to take for us. If you have not yet secured one, pray do so directly, and if . . . . . it's just the same. Well, then, to finish that which I have not commenced, I will terminate this scrawl by telling you you are a sad wretch for not answering my letters. I have written to you from Gloucester, Chester, and from all corners of the earth; but it appears this year is not favourable to those who dedicate themselves to literature, to the fine arts, or to those who, like myself, give themselves up in the most fervent manner to epistolary correspondence . . . . . Hem! ! ! no nonsense. Enough of chit-chat. I hope M. Laurent will be kind to me, and make up for all the bad conduct of him to whom I shall

in future say, *à la porte.** Not so bad from one unaccustomed to punning. Do you know what annoys me when I come to the conclusion of my epistles? It is, that I am forced to sign the name of Malibran at the end of a string of other nonsense.

TO THE SAME.

We have followed the current, that is to say, we have arrived one day sooner than we meant. To account for this, I must tell you we had a remarkably short passage, and a delightful one. The tide was favourable, the wind was fair, the . . . . . In short, in consequence of all these circumstances, we start by the *malle-poste* to-morrow, Saturday, the 24th, and shall arrive on Monday, the 26th;—do you hear that? Open your great little eyes. Mum. I wish to make my first appearance in the Gazza.

* Meant as a pun on the name of La Porte.

What do you say to that? My heart jumps with joy at the idea of again seeing the dear brat. I have been as sick as a dog, in spite of the favourable passage we have had. I am delighted with the lodgings. Bravo! I should like to have my sister with me. I will tell you hereafter—how and when? Don't say a word about it. Will you accept the humble prostrations of the most happy but foolish Mimiband? I wish to be thus called in future whenever I am in good spirits. I try to make you feel so in thus writing to you intelligibly, for not a single word can I make out in your letters. *Dixit.*

Till presently—until Monday.

What joy it will be to meet after such a long absence!

M. F. Malibran.

MADAME GARCIA TO THE SAME.

Paris, May 1st.

Sir,

Persuaded that Maria attends to everything you tell her, I venture to beg of you to suggest to her that she ought to reserve her strength and spirits for the theatre, and that she ought not to accept dinner invitations. You are aware Lalande has not been successful, and consequently Maria will have to make her appearance fifteen days earlier than she originally anticipated. She will probably be called upon to sing much oftener than she has stipulated for in her engagement. If she therefore gives herself up wholly to her profession, this will be a golden year to her; but if she insists on going about and exerting herself as she did in Paris, she will throw away the gifts of fortune. I have taken the liberty of enclosing a letter for my son, because I do not wish them

to know that Manuel was one of the *heroes*, and on your return I shall repay you the expense I put you to for postage, by showing you gratuitously a *Calvary* I am now dressing out, and for each sight of which I should otherwise charge you twopence. It is really very pretty, and I do not doubt you will desire to see it daily; so you see the saving to you will be considerable. Don't, however, trouble yourself about it. I shall keep you a place in the *first tier*.

I wish you would also tell Maria to ask the same sum for singing at the meetings which Pasta demanded; the exact amount she can easily find out.

Adieu, my dear baron; I pray you to excuse my *little bad French*. You may readily suppose I am very dull now that both my children have left me, otherwise I should more gaily assure you how truly I am your very obedient servant,

J. S. Garcia.

FROM MADAME MALIBRAN TO THE SAME.

10th of May.

Certainly, my dear friend, negligence has not been the cause of my not writing often. No: you know how well I like you, and how anxious I am to prove it, therefore I do not fear you will accuse me of forgetting you. Lalande having failed, I am up to my neck in business. A concert in the morning, two or three more in the evening, and the same thing over again the next day, not even excepting the nights I sing at the opera. I never enjoyed better health. I am now quite strong. My voice as clear in the morning as in the afternoon; it is never hoarse or husky. Madame Levestre takes as much care of me as if I were her own child. I ought to thank God and the good Madame Levestre for the care One takes of me invisibly, and the visible improvement of my health under the tender care of the other. On Wednesday I go to Bath,

after the concert. I shall arrive on Thursday, at nine A.M., and sing two pieces. At *one* o'clock I start for Bristol, where I shall arrive in less than an hour: there I play in the third act of Otello with Donzelli. I pocket one hundred and fifty guineas, and arrive in London next morning. Is not that delightful, "very delightful!" I have received a letter from the charming Madame D——; she asks me after you. I have a concert to attend this morning. I play the first act of Il Matrimonio, and the whole of Tancredi, this evening, for the benefit of . . . . . Lablache is quite the *rage*. I send you this short letter to convince you I am well, and embrace you as I like you.

MARIA.

TO THE SAME.

Sidney's Hotel, Bath, August 11.

Yes! I admit it. I have not written to you for two months, and I'll tell you why. First of

all, I must inform you, I never wrote so much in all my life as I have done since you left us. I am very idle. I detest writing, and it requires all my best resolution to fulfil my promise of addressing you often. For some time I did so regularly, but when you had left Toulon and reached Algiers, I thought there was little use in writing until you returned. This reason, added to my proverbial laziness, took away all desire to address you; but as a kind of set-off, in a fit of remorse I desired Madame Levestre to mention me in all her letters to you. I have been very nearly visiting the resting place of my ancestors: but Fate whispered, "She is kind—she is unfortunate. She shall live. Vivat!" She turned my bed round, and when Death came to take me by the head, he found to his great astonishment he was at my feet. Thus I was spared from making a journey to one of the extremities of the other world.

I am now quite well. Bath agrees with me. I remain until the 25th of August. Thanks to

my excellent and sincere friend, Dr. B——, I am in a completely restored state of health. I now continually display, as you say, the pink and white in my complexion. You must love this man, who has saved my life as much by skill and promptitude, as by *fatherly* kindness. You ought to like him, for he resembles you. I have written to-day a letter of eight pages to Monsieur de Lamartine. The pleasure of addressing him has led me on, perhaps, to express myself at too great a length; but he is indulgent, and will pardon the outpourings of a young heart anxious to prove its sincerity. My wrist aches with writing so much. So adieu, my dear friend. I wrote to Manuel before he started from Paris, to which he might have answered before he left. Pray bring me some pretty little *bijou*, such as the head of a Bedouin Arab, or other pretty toy, to ornament my Malibranian seigniory.

TO THE SAME.

Birmingham, October 1st, 1830.

My dear Friend,

When I think that in twenty-four days more I shall revisit my noble country, my heart leaps with joy. Fancy tells me I shall see the faces of Frenchmen changed; I picture to myself their countenances beaming with liberty, their eyes lit up by a holy fire, which bespeaks a glorious conviction of having done a good deed. All this seems clearer in my imagination than on paper, weak Mercury of my thoughts. Dear friend, you must procure me a house . . .

. . . . . .

. . . . . .

I have become more intrepid than ever, since France has once more replaced the old flowers, long dried in the attic, by promising buds of a sprouting nobility. They tell me all is not finished. I would willingly lose one arm in such a cause, and fancy I had gained two in

having thus assisted in supporting the laws of nature. I begin to warm on the subject; so adieu. Enough of gossip.

MARIA.

TO THE SAME.

This 7th of March, two o'clock in the morning.

How can I sufficiently acknowledge your goodness? — how find words to express to you my gratitude for your kindness? Don't mistake my meaning. It is not because you have taken me to ride with you on horseback. It is because you exert yourself with fervour to obtain for me every pleasure I can desire. It is for this goodness I must ever be your silent debtor, for I am unequal to speak my thanks, much less write them. You have no idea how sincerely joyed I am in seeing you happy. I am even more anxious for your welfare than my own; for your first happiness

consists in seeing me content, and my mind is a reflection of your own. Am I not right? I was anxious to repay you for your goodness, and please myself at the same time; so I came home early from M. de la Buillerie's concert, hoping to have a chat with you . . . . . I found no one. Heaven knows what life you had to enable you to get through so much business . . . . . Bad news! . . . . . Is it that I am right in supposing your headache proceeds from . . . . . .

Go and see your patron, and have a long chat with him. Yes, without doubt . . . . . come and see me during my dinner-time.

Your sincere friend,

MARIA.

TO THE SAME.

Never mind, you are a good devil; don't think I am going, like yourself, to fill my

letter with compliments. My flattery is reduced to two words. You are a good devil, and a kind busy-body, (with one's feelings,) by way of parenthesis. Truth compels me to admit that you have a good heart; at least so I believe. That's all. I reduce all I feel to a single jam lozenge, that is to say, to a single word. You are sincere and devoted. According to my ideas, they are the most grateful epithets I can apply to you, and you merit them.

I give you permission ! ! ! to come for a *moment* at three o'clock.

Adieu; they are waiting for me.

MARIA.

TO MONSIEUR LOUIS VIARDOT.

Rome, June 11th, 1832.

It is a fate which all must look forward to, and, when it arrives, endure with philosophy.

In so short a time to see so many persons carried off, and amongst others our best friend and my father ——! I only learned this dreadful misfortune at three o'clock this afternoon, thanks to the French ambassadress, who gave me, the day before yesterday, the newspapers containing an account of the counter-revolution. To-day she broke the unfortunate news to Charles in private. I soon discovered it; they vainly tried to hide it from me.

My poor friend! what anguish I feel! Misery, like a poniard, stabs me a thousand times in a single instant. I still refuse to believe it till I hear it officially confirmed. I am writing to my mother, but do not dare to allude to the subject. You are aware I never answered the letter, which neither you nor I could believe came from her; nevertheless I have had my pen in my hand a thousand times. I could no longer resist writing to ask after them, and since yesterday, when I learned the dreadful scenes that are acting in Paris

just now, my inquietude has increased a thousandfold. I pictured to myself that my poor father was mixed up in these horrors, and was just about to address him, when I was told the dreadful news.

At all events, let me know all about yourself and Leon. Tell us (for we have not heard from you for two months) whether you have not been in danger. If the cholera or the revolution have been able to carry off the other . . . . . Tell me I have not to deplore the loss of a father. Louis, for the last two months I have not received one letter from Madame L——; not a *single* line. Make her write to me, addressed No. 45, Piazza della Minerva. I impatiently wait to hear from you; I am in a state bordering on distraction, and anticipate a line from you to soothe my agonies. Unfortunately I cannot get off an engagement I have made here, to play three times a week for one month; that is, twelve performances. The manager has expended a good deal on new

scenery and dresses, and augmented his company to support me. You know my heart. Do not blame me. The day after St. Peter's, I appear in Otello. The singers are all bad. Embrace for me my mother, my brother, and ——. It is not possible—the newspapers must have given a false report.

Your sincere friend.

TO COUNSELLOR PAROLA.

Milan.

My dear Counsellor,

I write, although I am by no means sure that the post is starting; but I can no longer refrain from letting you know we are all well. With our usual rapidity we arrived at Modena by nine o'clock, in time to go and see the Sonnambula, with our friend the Marchioness Carandini; after the theatre, we immediately went to bed. On Tuesday we flew off

post, and arrived in Bologna by one o'clock: we were here also in time to see Norma. I came from it more convinced *than ever*, that the report of this opera being unsuccessful (which we heard in Milan) was false. Pasta was received with great applause. After the cavatina (which she certainly sang most wonderfully) she was called for *five* times. After the trio, twice, and warmly greeted whenever she appeared; twice after the duet in the second act, and that with Donzelli was also encored.

At the end of the performance she had to come forward twice. You see by these details, which are strictly true, how malicious were the reports of Pasta's having failed to please. Whenever they again tell you this, refer to my letter, and believe my version to be the true one. Between the acts I went round to see Pasta, who received me most graciously. She asked me after the Duke and Duchess, and thanked me, in the name of the inhabitants

of Milan, for having favoured them by singing there. It is impossible to be more amiable than Pasta. I therefore beg of you to contradict, on my authority, those who say she has been unsuccessful, and tell them of the triumph (in my presence) she gained.

I pray you, my dear counsellor, to present our compliments to the good Duchess, to the Duke, and to the amiable Baroness Battaglia, about whom I had a long chat with the Princess Hercolani.

A thousand remembrances to your wife, a thousand kisses to your children, and a shake of the hand for yourself, from

Your affectionate

M. Malibran.

TO BARON PERIGNON.

Milan, Dec. 13th, 1835.

Amiable Sir—dear Judge—

You have made my mouth water by speaking to me of playing in Paris. It is true, they have made me an offer (through our friend Troupitenas) to appear twelve times in the month of April next. You are not perhaps aware that by the end of March I shall have gone through sixty-five performances since the 15th of September; and that all I can snatch for pleasure or repose is a single month, including the time I must spend in travelling: that I have to go through a London season, which is the most fatiguing of all: that I have to study two new operas in English, and refresh my memory in two more. Certainly, when I reappear in Paris, I should like to do so fresh and well, and not jaded by two fatiguing seasons at Milan, and a journey across ice-clad

mountains, with heaps of snow, which threaten avalanches at every moment; and obstacles which, together with the wretched posting, render the undertaking tedious and wearying; not to speak of the amiable brigands of whom they recount each day some charming exploit, some interesting murder.

No! the dear Parisians shall only hear me when I shall have had a full month's repose, to enjoy the anticipation of again appearing before them;—a whole month dedicated to a single fear—the fear of not pleasing them as much as formerly.

Am I not right? do you not agree with me? I am grateful to the rumour which spoke of my being engaged, since it procured me the pleasure of receiving a letter from you. Try and find out some news as an excuse for a much longer letter. Tell me about Madame ——, *tell her I love her with all my heart*, and make her add a little "I love you," at the bottom of your next.

Charles would kiss her beautiful hands, if she would allow him. Will you undertake this commission for him, and accept our affectionate compliments?

I am bold to say that in me you have a true and grateful friend,

MARIA GARCIA.

THE PROGRESS

OF THE

ENGLISH OPERA.

THE

PROGRESS OF THE ENGLISH OPERA:

WITH NOTICES OF

MALIBRAN'S PERFORMANCES

ON THE ENGLISH STAGE.

The age of Elizabeth must be referred to, as that in which dramatic music in England was first established as a public entertainment. The plays of the time, especially those of Shakspeare, abound with instances of the introduction, not only of songs, duets, and other harmonized pieces of vocal music, but of descriptive music for instruments. The masques,

however, must be recorded as the first step in this country to the opera. These were produced for the amusement of the court; and, although occasionally resorted to many years previously, never flourished to such an extent as when Ben Jonson enriched them with his genius and scholarship. This prolific writer furnished thirty-one of these productions, besides half a dozen entertainments of a similar character. Several of these were performed by the chief nobility of both sexes at the court of James I. and Charles I., the queen and her ladies in more than one instance taking the principal characters. That of "The Vision of Delight," presented at court in Christmas 1617, was the first attempt at a regular opera; it being written in recitative, with occasional songs, dances, and chorusses. As some idea of this early performance may be interesting, we copy its commencement.

THE SCENE—*A street, in perspective of fair buildings discovered.*

Delight is seen to come as afar off, accompanied with Grace, Love, Harmony, Revel, Sport, Laughter, and followed by Wonder.

Stilo Recitativo.

Delight. Let us play and dance and sing,
Let us now turn every sort
Of the pleasures of the spring
To the graces of a court,
From air, from cloud, from dreams, from toys,
To sounds, to sense, to love, to joys;
Let your shows be new as strange,
Let them oft and sweetly vary;
Let them haste so to their change,
As the seers may not tarry.
Too long t'expect the pleasing'st sight,
Doth take away from the delight.

[*Here the first Anti-masque entered. A she-monster delivered of six Burratines,* that dance with six Pantaloons: which done—*

Yet hear what your Delight doth pray;
All sour and sullen looks away,
That are the servants of the day;

* Burlesque female characters, clothed in a peculiar stuff of that name.

Our sports are of the humorous Night
Who feeds the stars that give her light,
And useth than her wont more bright,
To help *The Vision of Delight.*

[*Night rises slowly, and takes her chariot bespangled with stars.*

See, see, her sceptre and her crown
Are all of flame, and from her gown
A train of light comes waving down.
This night, in dew she will not steep
The brain, nor lock the sense in sleep ;
But all awake with phantoms keep,
And those to make delight more deep.

[*By this time the night and moon being both risen, Night, hovering over the place, sang.*

Night. Break, Phant'sie, from thy cave of cloud,
And spread thy purple wings;
Now all thy figures are allowed,
And various shapes of things ;
Create of airy forms a stream,
It must have blood, and nought of phlegm,
And though it be a waking dream;

Chorus. Yet let it like an odour rise
To all the senses here,
And fall like sleep upon their eyes,
Or music in their ear."

This is the first example of an English *libretto*, and undoubtedly the best. All Ben's predecessors put together could not have produced the genuine poetry of some of the lines we have just quoted. But this is a small portion only of the masque, the dramatic character and the machinery of which are still unrivalled by modern opera writers. It was followed, on Saturday, February 22nd, by another on a similar plan, entitled "A Masque presented in the house of the Right Honourable the Lord Hay, by divers of noble quality his friends, for the entertainment of Monsieur le Baron de Tour, Extraordinary Ambassador for the French King;" and by several others. The scenes and machinery were usually the work of Inigo Jones, the architect: and when a professional singer was employed, "that most excellent tenor voice and exact singer, (her Majesty's servant, Master Jo. Allen,)" as Ben Jonson styles him in the "Masque of Queens, was resorted to. The dances were supplied by

Master Thomas Giles, and Master Herne; and the music (the instruments being principally cornets and violins) was composed and directed by Alphonso Ferrabosco the younger,—a musician of considerable celebrity at this period, but of whose works we know scarcely anything. Ben, however, has taken care his fame should not speedily decay, for in one of his epigrams he mentions him in these terms :—

" To urge, my loved Alphonso, that bold fame
Of building towns, and making wild beasts tame,
Which music had, or speak her own effects,
That she removeth cares, sadness ejects,
Declineth anger, persuades clemency,
Doth sweeten mirth, and heighten piety,
And is to a body, often ill inclined,
No less a sovereign cure than to the mind;
T' allege, that greatest men were not ashamed,
Of old, even by her practice to be famed;
To say indeed she were the soul of heaven,
That the eighth sphere, no less than planets seven,
Moved by her order, and the ninth more high,
Including all, were thence called harmony:

I yet had uttered nothing on thy part,
When these were but the praises of the art:
But when I have said, the proofs of all these be
Shed in thy songs, 'tis true—but short of thee."

Vocal music was, from the reign of Queen Elizabeth to this period, very extensively cultivated. Compositions written for the service of the church exhibited a high degree of merit, especially those of Dr. John Bull; whilst, in secular productions, such as madrigals and other "part-songs," as they were then styled, the age can boast of the genius of Wilbye, Weelkes, Cobbold, and Dowland, of whom the latter has had the advantage of being immortalised by the pen of Shakspeare. But in masques only can we trace any example of operatic music, and must advance to the year 1633 before we meet another effort worthy of being mentioned; such is Milton's splendid masque of "Comus," the music of which was produced by Henry Lawes. This skilful musician may boast of the honour of having had his

merits chronicled in verse by two of the most distinguished poets of the period in which he flourished. Milton alludes to him in one of his sonnets, as

> " Harry, whose tuneful and well-measured song ;"

and Waller, whose verses Lawes also set to music, addresses him in these words :

> " Let those who only warble song,
> And gargle in their throat a song,
> Content themselves with Ut, Re, Me ;
> Let words of sense be set by thee."

The third line of this verse alludes to the Italian names of the octave, then coming into fashion. The masque of " Comus," as far as we are enabled to judge by what has been preserved of the music, was not set in " Stilo Recitativo," as Ben Jonson calls it. The celebrated Miss Brent, the original Mandane in Arne's Artaxerxes, (who married Pinto the violin-player,) when she was seventy years of age played in this piece for a benefit at Covent

Garden Theatre in 1785, and delighted her audience by her style of singing Arne's music to some of its songs. But one of the greatest English operatic musicians of the seventeenth century was Matthew Locke, whose music to the lyric portion of Shakspeare's "Macbeth," after the lapse of nearly two hundred years since it was composed, excites the admiration of every genuine connoisseur. During the protectorate, the Puritans closed the theatre; but although plays were prohibited as the inventions of Satan, yet it was evident the sturdy Roundheads were not insensible to the charms of dramatic music; for Sir William D'Avenant, in 1656, obtained a license to open Rutland House, in Charter-house Square, for the performance of operas under the title of "Entertainments in declamation and music, after the manner of the ancients." Undoubtedly many genuine plays were smuggled into representation under this title; but to much music, equally genuine, it also afforded an introduction, par-

ticularly that of Locke to Shadwell's "Psyche," produced in 1675; and that of Bannister to Dr. D'Avenant's opera of "Circe," which was brought out some years later.

From these we at once proceed to a notice of their gifted contemporary, Henry Purcell. Although this distinguished musician contributed very largely to church music, his labours for the theatre were neither few nor unimportant. He had carefully studied the most famous masters of the Italian school, whose works were then beginning to be favourably known in England; and of them, in a preface to his twelve sonatas for two violins, and a bass for the organ or harpsichord, he says—"He has faithfully endeavoured a just imitation of the most famed Italian masters, principally to bring the seriousness and gravity of that sort of music into vogue and reputation among our countrymen, whose humour 'tis time now should begin to loathe the levity and balladry of our neighbours."

His introduction to the stage was of rather a singular character. It appears that a dancing-master of considerable repute, Josiah Priest, who invented dances for the theatre, got Tate to write a little dramatic piece called "Dido and Æneas," to be played by his pupils; and then asked Purcell, who had scarcely reached his nineteenth year, to supply the music to it. This was done, and with such effect that the audience by whom it was heard were astonished at the genius it exhibited. It was talked of—the managers of one of the principal theatres came to hear it, and the result was the composer's speedy employment at the playhouse. In the course of his brilliant career, Purcell composed the music to Nathaniel Lee's "Theodosius, or the Force of Love"—to Dryden's "King Arthur"—to Betterton's alteration of Beaumont and Fletcher's "Diocletian, or the Prophetess"—to the "Fairy Queen," altered from Shakspeare's "Midsummer Night's Dream"—to "Timon of Athens," "the Libertine,"

" the Tempest," as altered by Dryden; and to D'Urfey's "Don Quixote;" besides writing overtures and airs in the comedies of " the Indian Queen" and " the Married Beau," written by Crowne; " the Old Bachelor," " Amphitryon," " the Double Dealer," and " Virtuous Wife;" in the tragedies of " the Princess of Persia," by Elkanah Settle; " the Gordian Knot Untied," " Abdelazor, or the Moor's Revenge," from the pen of Aphara Behn; and in the " Bonduca" of Beaumont and Fletcher. The last is distinguished by possessing Purcell's still popular " Britons strike home," and his spirited quartette, " To arms!"

The productions of this composer are exceedingly numerous, both vocal and instrumental, and are equally various. At the head of his sacred music stand his glorious " Te Deum," and " Jubilate;" his songs and duets were the study of musicians for a long period after his death, which took place at the early age of thirty-seven years; and even at the present day

there are admirers of his genius, who believe with Dryden, that

> " Sometimes a hero in an age appears,
> But scarce a Purcell in a thousand years."

The same celebrated poet, in his ode on the death of Purcell, set to music with equal felicity by Dr. Blow, says—

> " The heavenly choir, who heard his notes from high,
> Let down the scale of music from the sky ;
> They handed him along ;
> And all the way he taught, and all the way they sung."

Some idea of him may also be drawn from the following humorous rebus in Latin metre, composed on his name, by a person of the name of Tomlinson.

> " Galli marita, par tritico seges,
> Prænomen est ejus, dat chromati leges ;
> Intrat cognomen blanditiis Cati,
> Exit eremi in ædibus stati,
> Expertum effectum omnes admirentur.
> Quid merent Poetæ ?—ut bene calcentur."

The translation of it here given, an indifferent one by the way, was set to music as a catch by Lenton.

" A mate to a cock, and corn tall as wheat,
Is his christian name who in musick's compleat ;
His surname begins with the grace of a cat,
And concludes with the house of a hermit; note that.
His skill and performance each auditor wins,
But the poet deserves a good kick on his shins."

Purcell's productions show the great progress that had been made in England in operatic music since the commencement of the century; but the study of the musical art, in all its principal branches, had also been making important advances. That period boasts of the works of Gibbons, Blow, and of many other English composers of less note. Instrumental music was also much cultivated. The virginals gave place to the organ and harpsichord, for which excellent works were written by the musicians we have named.

The lute was now supplanted by the viol; but a composer, who liked not the latter instrument, set the following ridiculous description of it as a *round*.

" Of all the instruments that are,
None with the viol can compare;
Mark how the strings their order keep,
With a whet, whet, whet, and a sweep, sweep, sweep;
But above all, this abounds
With a zingle, zingle, zing, and a zit, zan, zounds."

The viol and the harpsichord were the favourite instruments of the polished gentleman and lady of that period, and many individuals among the higher classes of society distinguished themselves by their proficiency upon them. Part-singing, too, was an equally fashionable accomplishment, and was heard in madrigals, rounds, catches, and every species of harmony for two or more voices, then practised. The principal public singers were Mr James Bowen, Mr. Harris, Mr. Freeman, Mr. Pate, Mr.

Damascene, Mr. Woodson, Mr. Turner, and Mr. Bouchier; Mrs. Mary Davis, Miss Shore, (afterwards Mrs. Cibber,) Mrs. Cross, Miss Champion, and Mrs. Ann Bracegirdle. Foreign singers, however, began now to make their appearance, and were generally heard between the acts of some popular play. They also gave concerts, and in a short period became so fashionable, that, as has been stated in the Introduction to the first volume, an attempt was made by their patronesses, at the commencement of the eighteenth century, to establish an Italian Opera. "The Italian manner" quickly became the model of all the English operatic composers, till the appearance of Gay's admirable burlesque of it in 1728, "The Beggars' Opera," the beautiful music of which was selected and arranged by Dr. Pepusch, a composer of considerable talent; evidences of which he has left us also in his masques of "Venus and Adonis," and the "Death of Dido," in his cantatas, and in his "Treatise on Harmony."

"The Beggars' Opera," which was brought out at Rich's theatre in Lincoln-inn Fields, met with the most decided success: it ran sixty consecutive nights, and continued to be repeated with increased gratification. In 1777, Linley enriched its instrumentation with considerable skill, particularly in the employment of the oboe, French horns, and clarionets. The same year brought forward a pupil of Dr. Arne as Captain Macheath, who afterwards became the wife of Dr. Kennedy, and was one of the most celebrated singers of her time. On this occasion she acquitted herself very creditably, and played the highwayman with effect equal to that created by her feminine successors in the same character. Mrs. Billington has been unrivalled in her personation of Polly, which she performed in 1790. In 1797, this favourite entertainment was repeated with Incledon as Captain Macheath, who sang exquisitely with Madame Mara as Polly, in the music of which she was only excelled by Mrs. Billington, and Mrs.

Martyr as Lucy—a pleasing second-rate singer. Mrs. Crouch, Miss Bolton, and Mrs. Mountain, also appeared with great success in this opera. Miss Stephens appeared as Polly, in 1813, with less effect as an actress, though certainly she acquitted herself admirably as a singer. We have had Pollys out of number since, but they will not detain us. Of the innumerable Macheaths, there has not been one with a voice equal to that of Incledon. Bellamy at one time played the part with credit, and Mr. W. Harrison is the only singer we have heard who acts up to the character, and is a singer worthy of the music.

In Dr. Arne we meet with a composer capable of disputing the claims to popularity of the foreign musicians of his time. Himself, his sister, and his brother, possessed considerable dramatic talent ; and in the Doctor's earliest operatic production, Addison's "Rosamond," first performed, March 7th, 1733, at Lincoln's-Inn fields, the cast embraced these

relatives. It runs thus :—the King, Mr. Barbier; Sir Trusty, Mr. Leveridge; Page, *Master Arne ;* Messenger, Mr. Corfe; Queen, Mrs. Jones; Grideline, Miss Chambers; and Rosamond, *Miss Arne.* The latter ultimately became Mrs. Cibber, and was long known as a sweet and accomplished singer. Dr. Arne married Miss Cecilia Young, (a pupil of Geniniani,) a vocalist of equal celebrity. After "Rosamond," he brought out a burletta on the subject of "Tom Thumb"—produced music to Milton's "Comus"—and to two other masques, "Britannia," and the "Judgment of Paris ;" composed two oratorios—"Abel" and "Judith;" wrote music to an afterpiece, "Thomas and Sally," and an opera, "Eliza ;" and then produced his immortal "Artaxerxes." His other productions are, the music to the "Masque of Alfred"—to the opera of the "Fairies"—to the tragedies of "Elfrida" and "Caractacus"—his additions to Purcell in "King Arthur" — his Shakspeare songs—his music to the Stratford Jubilee, and to the entertainment

called " Achilles in Petticoats;" besides several sets of sonatas for violins and other instruments; and a series of lessons for the harpsichord. He died on the 5th of March 1778, and was buried in the church of St. Paul Covent Garden.

" Artaxerxes," which was first brought out in 1762, is the most regular English opera, on the Italian model, produced on the stage since the performance of Ben Jonson's " Vision of Delight." There is, however, this important difference in the two,—the music of " Artaxerxes" was the composition of an Englishman, that of the masque, of an Italian; but unfortunately it cannot be denied, that of Dr. Arne's work there is much to which he has no real title. It possesses many passages, note for note, from the foreign productions of which he was most enamoured; he not only thus made the music as Italian as he could, but his chief singers, with the exception of Miss Brent, the original Mandane, were of the same nation: which

brought on him the following castigation from the author of the "Rosciad."

"Let Tommy Arne, with usual pomp of style,
Whose chief, whose only merit's to compile,
Who, meanly pilfering here and there a bit,
Deals music out, as Murphy deals out wit;
Publish proposals, laws for taste prescribe,
And chant the praise of an Italian tribe;
Let him reverse kind Nature's just decrees,
And teach e'en Brent a method not to please;
But never shall a truly British age
Bear a vile race of eunuchs on the stage:
The boasted works called national in vain,
If one Italian voice pollutes the strain.
Where tyrants rule, and slaves with joy obey,
Let slavish minstrels pour th' enervate lay;
To Britons far more noble pleasures bring,
In native notes, while Beard and Vincent sing."

The individuals mentioned by this severe satirist were the principal English vocalists of the period. There were also Miss Rafter, afterwards the celebrated Mrs. Clive; Lowe,

the favourite male singer of Drury Lane, as Beard was of Covent Garden. Both had remarkably fine tenor voices, but Beard was much the best musician. Mrs. Barbier, whose talents found a chronicler in Addison, and Miss Turner, a delightful vocalist, the chief attraction at the concerts then held at the Swan and Castle; besides others we have named elsewhere.

Miss Brent produced great effect in Mandane; but in a few years she had rivals capable of disputing the palm with her as a native singer. The principal of these was Miss Cecilia Davis, distinguished in Italy, where her singing was much admired, by the title of L'Inglesina. This lady, however, was not satisfied with being considered the greatest singer her country had produced; she entered into a contest with the most fashionable Italian vocalists; and in the opinion of the best judges, Gabrielli, the Malibran of her time, found it difficult to prove a superiority over her. Ce-

cilia Davis was excelled by no English singer till the appearance of Mrs. Billington, who performed Mandane for the first time on the 13th of April 1787; and repeated the same character, with an effect even more brilliant, when she returned from Italy in 1804. Mandane has since been personated by all the principal female vocalists who have adorned the English stage; among whom the most worthy of notice are, Miss Bolton, Mrs. Mountain, Miss Paton, Mrs. Dickons, Miss Stephens, Madame Mara, Mrs. Crouch, and Miss Wilson, afterwards Mrs. Welsh.

The success of the "Beggars' Opera" occasioned many imitations. In 1731 appeared the "Village Opera," which in its turn shortly after gave rise to the still popular opera, "Love in a Village." The first Madge was Miss Davies, afterwards the wife of the celebrated composer, Jonathan Battishill. Rosetta never had so able a representative as Mrs. Billington, who made her *début* at Covent Garden Theatre, in that

character, on the 13th of February 1786, and by her performance established her reputation as an operatic singer; and though followed by a brilliant host of vocalists, she has not, in the opinion of the oldest musicians, been excelled. Among these we must notice Miss Bolton, afterwards Lady Thurlow; Mrs. Dickons, Miss Lyon, afterwards Mrs. Bishop; Mrs. Mountain, Mrs. Crouch, and Miss Stephens. Madge has found her most celebrated representatives in Mrs. Bland and Mrs. Liston.

Contemporary with Dr. Arne, during a part of his career, was Dr. Arnold, whose first effort as an operatic composer was produced in 1763 at Covent Garden Theatre, in his twenty-third year. This was the "Maid of the Mill," partly a compilation, but containing many evidences of unusual musical ability. Arnold has himself stated, that so anxious was he to possess an opportunity of getting his talents before the public eye, that he accepted the small sum of twelve pounds for producing this opera.

He afterwards composed several oratorios—the "Cure of Saul," in 1767—"Abimelech," the following year—"the Prodigal Son in" 1773—and the "Resurrection" in 1777. During the same period he was busily engaged in several dramatic performances, induced by his purchase of Marylebone Gardens, in which they were represented. Two of these, the "Revenge," and the "Woman of Spirit," were written by the unfortunate Chatterton, and they were performed by Mr. Reinhold, for many years a celebrated singer; Mr. Charles Bannister, the father of John Bannister, Master Cheney, and Mrs. Thompson.

The best productions of this composer are, however, to be met with in the "Castle of Andalusia: George Colman's "Inkle and Yarico," first performed August 4th, 1787; the "Battle of Hexham," the "Children in the Wood," and the "Cambro-Britons," in which he introduced his music. He wrote several sets of songs, both for Vauxhall and for Marylebone Gardens, of

which the best are, "Come live with me, and be my love," and "Ye Shepherds, so cheerful and gay;" that used to be finely sung at Vauxhall by Vernon, a favourite tenor singer there. He also re-composed Addison's "Rosamond;" but his talents were not of a nature capable of a successful rivalry with those of his more celebrated predecessor in that opera—and brought forth another oratorio, "Elijah, or the Woman of Shunam," which was one of the best of his attempts in this species of composition. He died on the 22nd of October 1802, and was buried in Westminster Abbey.

Dr. Boyce was another celebrated dramatic composer of the last century. His first effort for the stage was his music to Lord Lansdowne's masque, "Peleus and Thetis," which evinced talent of no common order. He was a pupil of Dr. Pepusch, and under his superintendence had studied the works of Palestrina, Orlando de Lasso, Stradella, Carissimi, Tallis, Bird, Purcell, and Orlando Gibbons; but as well as

possessing a mind stored with such learning, Dr. Boyce was a musician of considerable invention. The very graceful melody set by him to Lord Chesterfield's song, "When Fanny, blooming Fair," which may almost be said to have been his maiden composition, is a pleasing example of his originality. Strange to say, the "Masque" was composed by him when he, from some malady with which he had been afflicted, was incurably deaf; notwithstanding which, when it was performed by the Philharmonic society, it excited universal delight.

In 1750, he produced the music of two afterpieces, "The Chaplet," and "The Shepherd's Lottery," which were brought out successfully at Drury Lane Theatre. He wrote also a dirge for the procession in "Romeo and Juliet," a similar production for "Cymbeline," and the music of the songs in the "Winter's Tale." In sacred music, his genius was not less conspicuous.

His performances on the organ were of such

a nature, as to get him selected to be the successor of Mr. Joseph Kelway, organist of St. Michael, Cornhill, in 1736; and his general ability as a musician led, in the same year, to his appointment as one of the composers to the king. In the service of the church his learning had fine scope, and the advantage to which he employed it may most satisfactorily be ascertained from his splendid serenata of "Solomon," produced by him in 1747. He also composed anthems, odes, and other productions of a religious character, and several concerted pieces for instruments—particularly twelve sonatas for two violins and a bass, and eight symphonies for violins and other instruments. He died on the 7th of February, 1779, in his sixty-ninth year, having been born in 1710, and was buried in the crypt of St. Paul's cathedral.

Jonathan Battishill, at an early age, wrote melodies that were sung at Sadler's Wells, then of some repute as a place of entertainment, of which his fine hunting song, introduced by a re-

citative, " The Whistling Ploughman hails the Blushing Morn," followed by the spirited air, " Away to the Copse, to the Copse lead away," was long an established favourite. He afterwards became the conductor of the band in Covent Garden Theatre, where he presided at the orchestra. In 1764, in conjunction with Mr. Michael Arne, he produced the music of a serious opera, called " Almena," in which he displayed considerable dramatic ability; but in consequence of the uninteresting character of the *libretto*, now a common fault in such performances, the piece did not succeed. He next produced the music of an entertainment called " The Rites of Hecate," in which his talents were better appreciated; but Battishill is best known by his collection of songs, his catches and glees, many of which were very popular, and deserve the student's attention. His song, " Kate of Aberdeen," was deservedly a favourite; and his prize glee, written for the Noblemen's Catch Club, " Come, bind my brows, ye

Wood-nymphs fair," which obtained him a gold medal, in 1771, is another admirable example of his genius. He was an excellent organist, and played the masterpieces of Handel, Corelli, Arne, and Boyce, in a style unexcelled by any contemporary; and, in conjunction with an actor of the name of Lee, and Mr. Joseph Baildon, was the projector of the dramatic performances held at the Crown and Anchor Tavern. He died on the 10th of December, 1801, at the age of sixty-three, and was buried, by his particular desire, in St. Paul's, near the remains of Dr. Boyce.

It may be gathered, from what has been stated in the preceding pages, that musical talent in England had made great advances since the commencement of the eighteenth century. The Italian masters had not been studied in vain, and the same result which followed a knowledge of their excellence, waited upon a familiarity with the superior ability of Italian performers. Great improvements had taken

place in the English orchestra, which, assisted by native singers, in a few years made the performance of an English opera rival the perfection of its foreign rival.

Among the composers who did honour to this period we must notice Dr. Busby, who wrote the music to Holcroft's "Tale of Mystery," Monk Lewis's "Rugantino," Miss Porter's "Fair Fugatives," and Mr. Cumberland's "Joanna;" Dr. Crotch, principally known as the composer of the oratoria, "Palestine." In glees and other vocal pieces, the same age may boast of the genius of the Earl of Mornington, Dr. William Hayes, William Jackson of Exeter, Samuel Webbe, Dr. Harrington of Bath, Dr. Calcott, Stafford Smith, Sir John Stevenson, Dr. Cooke, and Mr. Stevens. The principal singers about the same period were Vernon and Harrison, Michael Kelly, Incledon and Braham, as tenors; Champness, Reinhold, Bartleman, John Bannister, Sedgwick, and Dignum, as the basses; while the principal

female singers were Miss Linley, (afterwards Mrs. Sheridan,) Mrs. Billington, Mrs. Baddely, Miss Phillips, (afterwards Mrs Crouch,) Mrs. Jordan, Miss Romanzino, (afterwards Mrs. Bland,) Miss Mountain, Miss Poole, (afterwards Mrs. Dickons,) Miss Abrams, and Miss Wilson, (afterwards Mrs. Welsh.)

With such assistance it may be imagined that the English opera, towards the close of the last century, obtained a footing as an entertainment which made it capable of rivalling in attraction any dramatic performance native or foreign.

The composers who availed themselves of such advantages are neither few nor undistinguished. We now proceed to notice the most celebrated of them. Of these, Linley was one of the most popular. In 1776 he produced at Drury Lane the music to a new two-act piece from the French, called "Zelima and Azor." Garrick had sold his share in that theatre to him, Sheridan, who afterwards married his daughter, and Dr. Ford,

for thirty-seven thousand pounds; and this his first production during his co-management was remarkably successful. His son, a very fine player on the violin, then led the band. In 1778 he wrote the music for a very successful piece of Sheridan's, the "Camp," in which was introduced some beautiful scenery by J. P. Loutherburg. Bannister was the Serjeant Drill of the play, and made it one of his most amusing personations. This was followed, in 1784, by his music in the "Spanish Rivals," first played at Drury Lane on the 5th of November. In 1785 his talents were as successfully developed in Mr. Cobb's three-act comic opera, "The Strangers at Home," which possessed the advantage of Mrs. Jordan's clever acting, and unpretending yet delightful singing. In other operas Linley was equally successful. He composed a vast quantity of the popular music of the time, which, with little pretension to science, was always agreeable to the ear. He died on the 19th of November 1795. As a

composer for the voice, his principal rivals were Hook, Dibdin, and Shield. The former was the composer for Vauxhall Gardens, where his pleasing ditties were the great attractions of the evening. Dibdin's songs are chiefly of a nautical character. Many charming melodies may be found amongst them. As a musician, Shield was superior to both: his earliest operatic production was the "Flitch of Bacon," first brought out at Colman's theatre in the Haymarket in 1778. He was afterwards composer and musical director to Covent Garden, where he produced the music of "Rosina," which immediately established his reputation; afterwards he wrote for O'Keefe's "Poor Soldier:" in the following March he had ready, for its first night's representation, his share of the music, which comprised nearly the whole, of M'Nally's new comic opera, "Robin Hood;" and on the 16th of November he produced his portion of O'Keefe's "Fontainbleau." In 1788 he was equally successful with the music of "Marian," written by

Mrs. Brooks, the authoress of "Rosina." "The Woodman," a still more favourite production, was brought out at the same theatre on the 26th of February 1791. Incledon, Bannister, and Miss Poole, gave Shield's beautiful songs with admirable effect. We do not find him exercising his genius again for the stage till 1794, when, on February 22nd, he composed and compiled the musical portion of the "Travellers in Switzerland," written by the Rev. H. Dudley; and on the 22nd of the following April assisted in producing the music of Pearce's comic opera, "Netley Abbey."

On the 10th of November 1795, he assisted O'Keefe in a musical afterpiece, entitled "The Irish Mimic, or Blunders at Brighton;" and on the 6th of the following February had completed the music for Prince Hoare's popular opera, "Lock and Key." On the 25th of April 1797, he had laboured to the same purpose for another production by the same writer, entitled the "Italian

Villagers ;" and the same year he also furnished music for the " Wicklow Gold Mines." He contributed to several other dramatic pieces, particularly, in the year 1807, to the opera of " Two Faces under a Hood ;" and, in almost everything he attempted, produced evidence of taste, expression, and originality. He died on the 26th of January 1829, aged eighty-two years, and was buried in the cloisters of Westminster Abbey. Shield was certainly fortunate in possessing such singers as Billington, Miss Poole, Incledon, Johnstone, Bannister, and Edwin ; but they had as much reason to be gratified in meeting with such a composer.

Some doubts exist as to Michael Kelly's right to a considerable portion of the music that bears his name. It was well known that his knowledge of harmony was exceedingly limited ; but whatever may have been his deficiencies as a musician, he managed to conceal them so well as to be appointed director of the music and

composer to Drury Lane, and afterwards director of the music to the Italian Opera; and besides performing as the principal singer at each of these theatres, there are nearly sixty different operatic productions to which he attached his name. Mazzanto, a veteran Italian, is said to have afforded him important assistance in his musical works, but he shares that honour with one or two others. He was first the pupil of Rauzzini in singing, and when he was sixteen left Ireland, where he was born in 1762, for Naples, where he obtained the patronage of the British minister Sir William Hamilton, and the tuition of a much greater man, Aprili. By the influence of the latter he procured an engagement at Leghorn; and, after singing with success at several of the Italian theatres, proceeded to Germany, where he had the good fortune, at Vienna, to be one of the original singers in Mozart's "Nozze di Figaro." He made his first appearance in London, at Drury Lane Theatre, in the opera of "Lionel and Clarissa," and was a po-

pular singer and composer for many years afterwards. His most successful efforts as a musician were produced in the once popular "Bluebeard," first performed at the same theatre on the 16th of January 1798, in which he was a principal singer, and was assisted by Barrymore, Suett, Bannister, Mrs. Bland, Miss Decamp, (afterwards Mrs. Charles Kemble,) and Mrs. Crouch. "Pizarro," first produced at Drury Lane on the 24th of May 1799, owed also some obligations to him; and the music of the "Peasant Boy," which is also called his, first represented at the Lyceum on the 1st of January 1811, obtained equal favour. His death occurred at Ramsgate on the 15th of October 1816.

We cannot claim Storace as an English composer, though he undoubtedly laboured extensively in the production of English operas; and the same reason prevents our placing his sister, Signora Storace, among our vocalists, although she was for a long period one of the chief at-

tractions of the English stage. We therefore pass on to such as we have an undoubted right to. M. P. King wrote the music of several dramas, particularly of Mr. Kenney's "False Alarms, or the Blue Stocking," produced on the 3rd of January, 1811, at Drury Lane; of Thomas Moore's "M.P., or the Blue Stocking," represented at the Lyceum on the 9th of September, 1811; and "Up all Night, or the Smuggler's Cave,"—an entertainment that proceeded from the latter theatre, after it had been re-built, on the 15th of June 1816. He also distinguished himself as a pleasing glee-writer. His "When shall we three meet again?" deservedly remains a favourite. The late Lord Dudley and Ward behaved towards him with extraordinary liberality, advancing him at different times money to the amount of 10,000*l.*; notwithstanding which, when he died, he left his family in straitened circumstances; so much so, that, about eight or ten years since, they emigrated to North America, where the widow and

daughters opened a school, and the sons taught music.

Other operatic productions were heard from the stage about the same time, that possessed the music of Mazzinghi, Reeve, Attwood, and Davy. The first two of these gentlemen were the Beaumont and Fletcher of the opera; and the earliest example of their combined talents was Cobb's "Ramah Droogh, or Wine does Wonders," a comic opera that went off successfully on the 12th of November 1798. With still greater effect the same union continued in Cobb's popular "Paul and Virginia," that came out on the 1st of May 1800; and again in Prince Hoare's "Chains of the Heart, or the Slave by Choice," first performed on the 9th of December of the following year. "Paul and Virginia" came recommended by the delightful singing of Incledon and Mrs. H. Johnston; and the "Chains of the Heart" possessed no less attraction in the first appearance at Covent Garden of Braham and Storace. This interesting partnership dissolved a few years

afterwards; and of their individual efforts, Reeves composed the music to Reynolds' "Out of Place, or the Lake of Lausanne," produced on the 3rd of March; and Mazzinghi furnished similar materials for the same author's more popular opera, "The Exile," brought out at the King's Theatre, by the Covent Garden company, on the 10th of November 1808. Attwood is mostly known as an operatic composer, with Mr. Moorhead, of the music of "Il Bondicani," an opera represented for the first time, on the 15th of November 1800, at Covent Garden Theatre; and Davy was also associated with Moorhead in the production of the music of "La Perouse, or the Desolate Isle,"—a pantomimic drama that came out on the 28th of February of the following year, and met with most decided success.

Braham has obtained a celebrity which has not been surpassed by any performer on the English stage, the boards of which he first trod at Covent Garden in the character of

"Shepherd Joe" in "Poor Vulcan," for the benefit of his master, Leoni. This was in 1787, fifty-three years since, and he is still a singer! For a long time his success was anything but certain. His encores were feeble, and he rarely repeated a song without considerable disapprobation; but Signora Storace, who was usually on the stage with him, had a manner of eyeing the refractory part of the audience, when she led him forth to comply with the dubious encore that used to silence every effort at opposition; and we believe the encouragement this fashionable singer afforded him was the foundation of his successful career.

His great effort as a composer will be found in Dibdin's popular comic opera, "The English Fleet in 1342." He had previously appeared to advantage as a composer in Dibdin's comic opera "The Cabinet," which came out on the 19th of February 1802, in the music of which he was assisted by Rauzzini, Davy, Reeve, Corri, and Moorhead. But "The Eng-

lish Fleet" was solely his own. It was first produced at Covent Garden, the 13th of December 1803, with an unprecedented success; and as a proof that musical talent was increasing in value, we compare the prices received by their several composers for the four most popular operas produced during the term of fifty years. For "Artaxerxes" Dr. Arne, in 1763, obtained sixty guineas; for "Rosina," in 1781, Mr. Shield was satisfied with forty pounds; for "the Siege of Belgrade," Storace pocketed, in 1791, just one thousand pounds; and for "the English Fleet," in 1804, Braham, more fortunate still, received one thousand guineas.

He assisted in composing other operas after this, but with very different results. Since then he has continued a singer, as regards sacred music, the most effective this country has produced. We remember him at the last grand musical festival held in Westminster Abbey, when he created an impression that the Italian vocalists there engaged never approached. After making,

by his exertions during his long career, a fortune such as foreigners alone had hitherto obtained in this country, he was so ill advised as to embark in two speculations—the St. James's Theatre and the Colosseum—by which, we are afraid, he has lost nearly the whole of it.

Horn and Parry have also put forth some pretensions as operatic composers; but they aim at nothing beyond the talent of forming pretty melodies, similar to those that may be found supporting the reputation of such men as Lee, Wade, Nelson, Rodwell, T. Cooke, and others of about the same musical calibre, whose ballads have formed the staple in most request at the music-sellers for the last ten years. The works of Henry Bishop are of a much higher order of merit. They exhibit the resources of the musician—taste, learning, invention, and judgment, to an extent that has rarely been excelled by any of his countrymen. As a boy, he was distinguished by his love of the art of which he was ultimately to become

an ornament; and his proficiency on more than one instrument, and facility in composition, early attracted the notice of friends who knew to what advantage they might be applied. In a great measure, he may be said to have been self-taught;—the tuition of Bianchi, his first master, amounted to nothing very important; he may possibly have profited by the lessons of Anfossi, with whom he associated when a youth: but, although instruction he did receive from more than one musician, his great natural talent quickly forced him beyond the limits of their guidance. The manager of one of the patent theatres became acquainted with his ability, and in a very short time afterwards M. P. King, who was then the first English opera composer, was thrown completely into the shade by Bishop's superior genius. He was appointed director of the music, and composer to Covent Garden—and afterward filled the same office at Drury Lane.

One of his earliest efforts in the musical drama was in a four-act opera, called "Kais, or Love in the Deserts," produced at Drury Lane Theatre on the 11th of February 1809, in which Storace and Braham played the principal characters. It was very favourably received, and followed, on the 23rd of the same month, by his "Circassian Bride," distinguished by the performance of Miss Lyon, afterwards Mrs. Bishop. The night afterwards this theatre was burned to the ground—a fate that had fallen upon Covent Garden not six months before. In this disastrous conflagration, the composer lost the score and the whole of the music of his opera. A singular circumstance happened in connexion with these fires. Huntingdon, an evangelical coal-heaver, held forth in his conventicle in a furious strain of congratulation at the destruction of both our great theatres, which he styled the devil's houses, and affirmed that their being burned down was a manifest

judgment. The following week a fire broke out in the next house to his chapel, which so completely shared the fate of the theatres as to leave scarcely a wall standing.

The Drury Lane company then acted at the Lyceum, where Mr. Bishop laboured in his vocation for Arnold's opera, "The Maniac, or the Swiss Banditti," first performed on the 15th of March 1810. Here his ability as a musician was also clearly developed, but not with such effect as resulted from his labours upon Pocock's popular melo-drama, "The Miller and his Men," brought out in the winter of 1813. On the 1st of the following February, the Covent Garden management put forth a new comic opera, entitled "The Farmer's Wife," written by Charles Dibdin, and composed by Bishop, Reeve, Condell, T. Welsh, Davy, and Addison. It had a favourable reception, and Bishop's share of the music was generally admired. Sinclair and Miss Stephens gave it

the advantage of their "most sweet voices;" and on the same day in the same month of the following year, at the same theatre, associated with Reeve, he produced the music of another new comic opera, called "Brother and Sister," wherein Duruset met with a favourable reception.

Bishop, indefatigable in his exertions, completed, on the 17th of January 1815, his pleasing additions to Shakspeare's "Midsummer Night's Dream;" and by the 12th of March, in conjunction with Whittaker, was ready with the music of "Guy Mannering." His labours on each do him infinite credit. By the 12th of November 1816, he produced his charming music to Morton's opera, "The Slave," also at Covent Garden; and on the 11th of December 1819, for the same theatre, displayed his genius, with equal success, in illustrating Shakspeare's "Comedy of Errors." Our immortal dramatist was evidently the favourite study of Mr. Bishop, for, in addition to the tasks we have

already named, on the 18th of November 1820, he produced his delightful embellishments to the "Twelfth Night," in which the "Viola" of Miss M. Tree was a performance that well deserved the reputation it procured her. We find him, by the 18th of March 1821, engaged in arranging and composing music for the old comedy of "The Chances," cooked up by Reynolds at Covent Garden as a sort of opera; and, on the 14th of February 1822, performing a similar labour for an entertainment called "Montrose, or the Children of the Mist." Planche's "Maid Marian," produced on the 30th of the following November, afforded his genius much greater scope, and, as a natural result, his music is admirable throughout. Bishop was now revelling in the full strength of his resources, far excelling any of his English contemporaries, and affording proofs of talent that foreign musicians must have respected.

On the 8th of May he delighted the fre-

quenters of Covent Garden with a fresh display of his musical powers, in the still popular opera of "Clari, or the Maid of Milan," wherein Miss M. Tree's performance was again a source of extraordinary gratification. "The Fall of Algiers" was represented on the 19th of January 1825, at Drury Lane, with less effect: notwithstanding which, the music is clever. Sapio and Miss Stephens were the principal singers; but though their vocal efforts won them approbation, their acting was never very effective. At the same theatre, on the 27th of January 1827, there was heard for the first time Mr. Bishop's opera "Englishmen in India" —comprising many very superior productions; since when he has gone on in his career, putting forth occasionally some work, such as "Aladdin," to remind his admirers that he still possesses the imagination and judgment that charmed them in earlier years, but more frequently labouring upon indifferent dramas, which no musician could render popular; or in arranging

for the English stage some of the best works of foreign composers, wherein he had no opportunity of giving evidence of his originality. Fortunately, of this no further evidence can be required: for no English musician has contributed to the theatre such a mass of excellent dramatic music. His songs, duets, glees, and other concerted vocal pieces, distinguished by their originality, are much too numerous to be here named individually; and their merit is so well appreciated, that such a catalogue is unnecessary.

Bishop has undoubtedly raised himself to the rank of a musical classic; and the finished efforts of his best days are such as the most gifted musician might have been proud to acknowledge. In none of the dramas for which his music was composed, has he had that scope for display which the libretto of the Italian, French, and German opera usually allows; we therefore cannot fairly compare him with any of the great masters who have distin-

guished themselves in those schools, but it is no less true, that within the limits to which he has been confined, he has exhibited the legitimate resources of his art with an effect that many of the most fashionable Italian composers, with all their advantages, have never produced.

Since the commencement of the present century the study of music in England has advanced, in all its departments, to an extent never previously known in this country. On the stage, besides the works of native composers, we have had, in an English form, the masterpieces of foreign music, till we may almost say, that Mozart, Beethoven, Weber, Rossini, Bellini, and Auber, have become naturalized here. Of these arrangements, we must distinguish the "Fidelio" of Beethoven, and the "Somnambulist" of Bellini, as possessing the two most important personations with which Malibran enriched the English stage. A familiarity with such productions has had important effects. The musical student has taken

them as models, and, as many a recent opera proves, with no inconsiderable advantage.

John Barnett has imbibed his ideas of his art from the German school. His first master was Bochsa, who was at this period musical director and composer of the King's Theatre, and in more than one ballet of the great harpist there brought out, some of the most favourite passages were produced by Master Barnett. The latter, however, found that lessons came so few and far between, that he provided himself with another master. He turned his attention to tho works of Spohr, Beethoven, and Weber, and traces of his attentive study of them may be found in each of his operas. After considerable experience in dramatic composition for unsuccessful dramas, varied by attempts of less pretension made when appointed composer to Madame Vestris's theatre, the Olympic, he produced his first and best work, "The Mountain Sylph," at the Lyceum. Popular as it has been, we regard it rather as an example

of clever scholarship than genius. It is possessed of several striking passages, and ingenious in many of its concerted pieces, but as an opera it wants relief. "Fair Rosamond" and "Farinelli," his more recent productions, possess the same faults. The learning of the composer is somewhat too ostentatiously displayed, and often so as to injure his claim to originality; yet with it are introduced to us such beautiful phrases and ingenious harmonies, as are sure to excite the admiration of the critic. Barnett has composed several songs that have enjoyed considerable popularity. Besides the music published with his name, he is also the composer of a series of songs and duets, to which the name of Devereux is attached, that were brought out a few years since.

Balfe has studied in the Italian school, and is much too fond of repeating his lessons. Paesiello and Cimarosa would have been far better guides to him than the imitators of Rossini, to whose second-hand resources he appears

so attached. In fact, we scarcely know whether we ought to place him here as an English musician, for if from the works he has produced every exotic grace were removed, we are fearful what remained would be too insignificant to deserve notice. As the composer, however, of the " Maid of Artois," in which Malibran's matchless performance has connected her name inseparably with the English stage, we cannot mention Mr. Balfe without our acknowledgments for the great gratification he enabled us to enjoy. We regard Falstaff (an opera he had the good fortune to get brought out at the Queen's Theatre) as the most favourable specimen of his ability as a musician. Lablache and his talented coadjutors made us fancy we were listening to a superior work of Donizetti's.

Superior to either of the composers we have just mentioned is Rooke, also, like Balfe, who was his pupil, an Irishman. He is superior, because he is infinitely more original. His

genius is not so invalided as to require his frequently taking the benefit of the *Spohr*, like some of his contemporaries; or his clerkly accomplishments of such a character as to make it necessary for his mind to apply itself to book-keeping in "the Italian method," like others. Unfortunately for him, the libretto of each of his operas is as uninteresting as such a thing could be made, and consequently he has hitherto been exerting musical talents of the highest order under the greatest disadvantage. Notwithstanding this, it is impossible to look into his "Amilie," or his "Henrique," and not admire the extent of his resources. He possesses extraordinary ingenuity both in melody and harmony, without showing too conspicuously the mechanism of his art in either. He is expressive, dramatic, and often picturesque; and with a drama of a high character, on which we should be glad to see him engaged, there is no doubt he would produce such an opera as must be a lasting ornament to the English stage.

The dramatic efforts of Packer, Loder, and one or two other musicians of the present day, we look upon as promises rather than performances. It is the very foolish opinion of the majority of our composers, that the libretto of an opera is a subject of secondary consideration; and the result is, that instead of a poetic drama, which ought to be their material for illustration, they obtain a foolish story, composed of improbable incidents and common-place characters, in a language that Grub-street would be ashamed of. We refer them to the masques of Ben Jonson, or the operas of Metastasio, to prove to them that better musicians than themselves were of a different way of thinking. A musical phrase should be the interpretation of a poetical idea, illustrated in some characteristic manner by the genius of the composer; but without ideas in his author how is a musician to produce one in his score? It usually happens that the latter relies upon situation; but though this resource may enable him to produce im-

portant effects for a time, it is nonsensical to imagine that these merely artistical displays will long be effectual, unsupported by any genuine appeal to the intellect.

English music owes much to the different musical societies established in this country of late years, particularly the Philharmonic, the Societa Armonica, and the Society of British Musicians. The last was an admirable institution for the encouragement of native talent, and its performances did unquestionably develope talent of a high order in musical composition. We have a very agreeable remembrance of the works of Sterndale Bennet, Litolff, and other young composers, heard there with all the effect of the society's fine orchestra; and from this remembrance we anticipate for them a distinguished career in their profession. The voice also has been cultivated here with such success that we could afford to the Italian opera such singers as Mrs. Wood and Madame Albertazzi, and Mr. Boisragon, (Signor Bor-

rani;) while our own stage has been enriched with such vocalists as Miss Bellchambers, Miss Love, Miss Povey, Miss Inverarity, Miss Sheriff, Miss Lacy, Mrs. Waylett, Mrs. Fitzwilliam, Madame Vestris, Miss M. Tree, and Miss Fanny Ayton; Mr. Phillips, Mr. Leffler, Mr. Balfe, Mr. W. Harrison, Mr. Allen, Mr Barker, Mr. Wilson, Mr. Frazer, Mr. Collins, and Mr. Templeton.

In the orchestra we have been equally successful, having been able to boast of such performers as Mori, Watts, Lindley, Parke, Grattan Cooke, Willman, Nicholson, Parker, and a host of others almost equally celebrated on their several instruments. The quartette concerts, the chamber concerts, and the concerts à la Musard, were the most convincing evidence of the immense improvement that since the commencement of the century have taken place in the performance of instrumental music in England. In short, in every department of operatic music, great advances have been made; and it

requires only an English musician, with a mind capable of employing them properly, to place the English theatre on a footing of equality with its rivals.

Much of the improvement which has recently taken place in the musical drama of this country is due to the exertions of Malibran, who was not only an example for every Englishwoman who has since her performances appeared as a dramatic singer, but was in a great measure the instructor of her coadjutors, vocal and instrumental, in every opera in which she sang on the English stage. The orchestra sought as diligently to play up to her, as did her fellow singers. Her extraordinary displays stimulated the endeavours of every individual of the slightest talent with whom she was then engaged, and the result appeared in operatic entertainments superior to everything of the kind of native growth previously known. Her "Sonnambula," the first of these unrivalled personations, was a study for the musical artist;

the delicious singing, the finished acting, and the intimate sympathy for the beautiful and the intellectual which it developed, cannot but be fresh in the recollection of our readers. Amina became the type of grace and innocence, suffering from unjust suspicion, in situations of singular interest, and ultimately triumphing over it, as completely as it should always triumph. Bellini's melodies are peculiarly pleasing, but, heard with the advantage of Malibran's vocal ability, they appeared delicious. She awakened the English public to a conception of the highest intellectual enjoyment that could be derived from the musical drama, and afforded such lessons to their taste, as made it capable of appreciating the minutest excellence of musical science. No person of imagination ever witnessed her Amina without becoming a musician; and, by the same wonderful agency, the most vulgar mind was made sensible of intellectual impressions previously unknown to him. The true-hearted heroic Fidelio was the next

of her glorious creations. We had previously beheld Schröeder in this character, in which it may be said that the fair German was as thoroughly at home as it was possible for so clever a woman of her country to be in masterpieces of her country's musical science; but in Malibran there was a grace of which Schröeder was deficient. There can scarcely be a finer contrast than exists in the music of Bellini and Beethoven. The mind of Malibran could feel the influence and appreciate the excellence of both, and her impressions of the graceful Italian and the profound German she was enabled, by the exercise of her genius, to convey to her hearers. The thunders of applause and enthusiastic encores with which they rewarded its exercise, evinced the completeness with which they felt its influence.

Malibran's efforts in one or two other characters in which she appeared at Drury Lane for a few nights, and even those in Balfe's "Maid of Artois," are not to be compared with her pre-

vious performances on the English stage; yet the same intellect, the same skill, and the same grace, presided over all. Of the latter her Isolina was the most effective, although she had neither the scope nor the materials for display in either, which the resources of Beethoven and Bellini had provided. The impression she made in those operas, no other singer could have produced. We must therefore think the more highly of her talent, that could create with the meretricious and the unpopular, dramatic effects that she alone excelled, when assisted by two of the greatest masters of the modern musical drama.

ITALIAN

SONNETS, ODES, &c.

ADDRESSED TO

MADAME MALIBRAN.

SONNETS, ODES, &c.

SONNET

Inscribed to Madame Malibran, in 1830, *at the close of her engagement at the Theatre Italien in Paris.*

O più di Euterpe, o almen tu Euterpe sei,
Donna, che imperi col divino accento
Sovra i moti del cor, e incanti e bei
Chi da te pende ad ammirarti intento.

Perfin le aurette riverenti e il vento
Al canto lieto ed ai dogliosi omei
Sospendon l' ali, e van reggendo a stento
L'armonia delle sfere i sommi Dei.

Oh d'Italia splendor, madre feconda
Di Geni alteri, a cui piega la fronte
Chi sta sull' arsa e la gelata sponda!

Freme al tuo piè l' Invidia, e il sacro monte
Suona per te di laude vereconda,
Secura ai colpi del rio Veglio e all' onte.

ODE

Written on the same occasion as the foregoing.

Qual tumulto d'insoliti affetti
Agitando vien l' alma nel seno,
Che or ne turba il soave sereno,
Or la invita al sospira d' amor ?
Perchè a questi, che intorno mi stanno,
Scorgo in volto il diletto e l' affanno
Alternati alle scosse del cor ?

Chi produce si fulgidi effetti,
Chi signora è dell' alme cotanto,
Che a suo senno il sorriso, ed il pianto
Fa sul labbro, o sul ciglio spuntar ?
Ah ! sei tu, che col magico accento
Opri, o Donna, il sublime portento
Di far teco gioire e penar.

A diffonder lo spirto e la vita
Fura al sole scintilla possente
Quel mortal, cui natura languente

Dal torpore fu dato destar.
Tutto dorme . . . . dal labbro ti scende
Una fiamma, che il core ne accende,
Lo fa in seno commosso balzar.

Col divino poter di sua cetra
Placò Stige di Tracia il Cantore ;
Temprò all' ombre l' eterno dolore,
Pluto stesso a suoi voti piegò.
Tu produci portento simile,
Donna illustre, in ogni alma gentile,
Cui sventura od amore piagò.

Che mai valsero ad Argo i cent' occhi
Alla possa del flauto febeo ?
Mal vegliare all' incanto poteo ;
All' impero del sonno cedè.
La più fiera d' affetti tempesta
Al poter di tua voce s' arresta,
Vinto è sempre ogni senso da te.

Di, qual nume t' invade furtivo
Quando schiudi l' armonico labbro ?
Forse allora t' ispira quel fabbro,
Che in te un' alma si bella temprò ?

Ma qual forza, qual genio, qual dio,
Tal beltade, tal vezzo, tal brio,
Sì a dovizia in te, Donna, versò?

Il tuo merto è il mio sommo pensiero;
Mi sublima l' eccelso tuo volo,
Svengo ai lagni di un tenero duolo,
In te assorto la notte ed il dì.
Che stupir, se a me stesso rapito,
Vincitore il piacer dell' udito,
A ragione i suoi dritti rapì,

In segno di sincera ammirazione

P. e. P.

SONNET

Addressed to Madame Malibran, on her departure from Naples to Bologna.

O Donna, ne' cui labbri Iddio compose
D' ogni bello la possa e la ventura,
E tutta in te l' idea splendente e pura
Dell' armonia dell' Universo espose:

Come la Terra, quando il Sol si ascose,
Stanza è di tristi augei dolente e scura,
Finchè non torni a ravvivar le cose
Il ministro maggior della Natura;

Tale nel tuo partir languente e grama
Rimansi ogni alma, e parle il giorno estremo
Il dì che il picciol Reno a se ti chiama;

E nell' abbandonato egro soggiorno,
Orbi per te di vita, attenderemo
Quasi raggio di Sole il tuo ritorno.

D. B.

STANZAS

Improvised at a dinner given by the Commandant of Bologna in 1832.

Talora al mio pensier questo i' dimando:
Se sia Femina o Uom la Malibran;
Che s' io la miro con l' elmetto e il brando
Traccia di Donna in Lei ricerco invan.
Gli atti, gli affetti, e l' ira quando a quando
Sembran di lui che diè briga a Vulcan,
Ed il sospetto mio anco avvalora
Ogni Donna che d' essa s' innamora.

Poi come ascolto quel divin suo canto
Nelli giudicii miei più mi confondo:
Che di sue note il suon levasi tanto
Quanto scende gravissimo al profondo.
Ma Donna al vago viso, agli occhi, a quanto
Sua bella vista altrui può far giocondo
Pur sembra: e io dico, se il pensier non erra,
Ch' è un Angelo dal ciel disceso in terra.

GIROLAMO ZAPPI.

SONNET,

Inscribed to Madame Malibran at Sinagaglia, in 1834, *by E. A. P.*

Donna, se tu nol sai, la terra è questa
Fortunata natal, d' altra Sirena,*
Onde la fama, sull' adriaca Sena
Ornamento e splendor, cotanto appresta.

Se non che, mentre l' onda il Tebro arresta,
E l' Europa, di gioja è tutta piena,
Sol la patria non bevve a simil vena
Il cantar portentoso; e ne fu mesta.

Or s' allegri però, Sena superba:
Ebbe in Te, chi ristora, ogni onta e danno
Ingrato, e d' altra figlia, imagin serba;

Chè se del nascer tuo, fors' è giocondo
Altro terren, pel raro asceso scanno
A Te, patria si feo, l' immenso mondo.

* L'Angelica Catalani.

FAREWELL,

Addressed to Madame Malibran by the Inhabitants of Lucca, on her departure from that city in 1834.

Figlia del Ciel benefica
Col chiaro raggio in fronte,
Onde natura allegrasi
Allor che indori il monte,
Allor che ti salutano
I musici canori
Sui mattutini albori,
Quanto sei cara a me!

Ah non sarai di gioja
Cagione lusinghiera!
Quando dovrai dividerci,
D' acerbo duol foriera,
Da Lei che ci mostrarono
I Numi in mortal velo,
Da lei ch' è nata al Cielo
E che perdiam con Te.

Tu sorgerai, ma splendere
Non ti dovranno in volto
Il bel sereno, e il gaudio,
Che avrai di nubi avvolto ;
E noi disciolti in lacrime
Ti seguirem col canto,
Che il nostro plettro intanto
Ripeterà così :

Parti, ma qui ne restano
Di tue virtù sublimi
Eterne le memorie,
Che in ogni petto imprimi,
Parti, ma pur ti seguono
De' cuori la speranza,
E quel disio che avanza
Di rivederti un dì.

Grato pensier nell' animo
Ritornerai sovente :
Noi ti vedremo spargere
Dal mesto cuor gemente
Sulla sopita vergine
Il pianto dell' amore,
L' affanno del dolore,
Che morte sol troncò.

Noi ti vedrem nell' ultimo
Di Norma orribil fato
Placar col sacrificio
Il Dio ver Te sdegnato
Indi innocente vittima
Del barbaro Affricano,
A cui involarti invano
La tema t' insegnò.

E in queste triste immagini
Ritornerà sul ciglio
Qualche pietosa lacrima
Al tuo crudel periglio:
E l' arte inimitabile
Dell' armonia che desti
Coi modi tuoi celesti
Rammenteranno in Te.

Ti pingeranno amabile
Quanto la Dea di Gnido;
Teco saran le Grazie,
Che sul tuo volto han nido;
Teco di Palla il Genio,
E in Te vedremo irata
Di Giuno invendicata
La maestà qual è.

Ninfe del patrio Serchio,
Che il merto coronate
Di Serto incorruttibile
A Lei la fronte ornate
Voi nel sentier seguitela
Spargendo pianto, e fiori,
Spargendolo d' allori
Fin dove il piè n' andrà.

Figli del sacro Apolline
Eco al mio canto ergete,
Meste le cetre dicano
Quanto con Lei perdete,
Ditele i nostri gemiti,
Come si aneli anch' ora
Quella felice aurora
Che a noi la renderà.

Ah che la tua bell' anima
Secondi i nos tri voti! . ...
Serba di noi memoria
Anche fra lidi ignoti.
Serto maggior di gloria
Forse ti fia concesso,
Ma non sarà lo stesso
Il cuor che lo donò.

Prendi l' addio dell' Esare
Ai mesti figli suoi
Sciogli un sorriso tenero . . .
Volgi uno sguardo, e poi . . .
Ma che tu pure il ciglio
Bagni di pianto? . . . ah sono
Paghi di sì bel dono.
Il Ciel gli 'secondò.

R. D.

ADIEU

To Madame Malibran, on her departure from Lucca.

Degli umani per conforto
Quando il Dio della natura
Più sorride a sua fattura
Te formava in un trasporto
Ineffabile d' amor.

Del suo spirto creatore
Volle in te più vaga idea
Dar colui che il tutto fea
Scaturir del nulla fuore
Ad un soffio animator ;

Quindi un raggio in te trasfuse
Del seren di Paradiso,
Nel tuo sguardo, nei sorriso,
Celestial grazia diffuse
spiegar lingua non può,

E dei cantici divini
Che degli astri al cheto giro
Van guidando nell' Empiro
A miriadi i serafini
Tempra e genio in te stampò ;

Indi il canto sì soäve
Onde i sensi e l' alme bei,
Per cui sola in terra sei
Che ogni affetto or dolce, or grave
Puoi ne' cuori suscitar.

Qua dell' Esare plaudente
Sull' aprica, amena sponda,
Sì fu sorte a noi seconda,
Astro fulgido, ridente
Tu venisti a scintillar;

Ma fugace qual baleno
Fu il diletto, fu l' incanto
Che quel magico tuo canto
Desto aveva in ogni seno,
Che tutt' alme fea gioir.

Quando il dì spuntò nel cielo
Che del giubilo supremo
Essar dee per noi l'estremo
Corse a ognun per l' ossa un gelo
All' idea del tuo partir;

Troppo grande è la dolcezza
Onde inebrj il core e i sensi,
Troppo il gaudio che dispensi
Perchè l' alma al bello avvezza
Possa il duolo raffrenar.

Come il sol che in suo vïaggio
Tutta illumina e riscalda
Qual' è più riposta falda
Col benefico suo raggio,
Coll' influsso salutar,

Tal se' tu dal cielo eletta
A beare altre contrade,
Che ben raro in ogni etade
E il trovar cosa perfetta
Qual natura in te formò.

Ma se a noi contende il fato
D' udir più sì cari accenti,
Se coi magici portenti
Di tua voce, a far beato
Altro suol ti destinò,

Come in noi di te il disio
Nutre ancor di speme un raggio
Questo serto, e quest' omaggio
Deh non spargere d' oblio
Che al tuo merto il Serchio offrì;

E degli anni indi nel giro
Se dal balzo porporino
Ti sorrida un bel mattino
Dona un palpito, un sospiro
A chi tu beasti un dì!

C. L. M.

LINES

Addressed to Madame Malibran on the same occasion as the above.

Noi t' ascoltammo : e l' anima
In estasi rapita
Credè gustare il gaudio
Della seconda vita,
E al suon dell' arpe eteree
Seder coi Numi in Ciel.
Noi t' ascoltammo : e immemori
Che mortal gioja ha fine
Credemmo eterne fossero
Le note tue divine ;
Ma di quel sogno amabile
Oggi si squarcia il vel.

Tornate ai mesti gemiti
Voi cui la sorte oppresse ;
Tregua il destin non termine
Al vostro duol concesse,
Più non vi è dato suggere
Da un labbro lusinghier

Il dolce oblio benefico
D'ogni cocente affanno,
E d'arte inimitabile
Colti al soave inganno,
Al pianto altrui sol piangere
Di duolo o di piacer.

E Tu cui tanto prodiga
Fu dei suoi don natura,
Per quella voce angelica
Che dissipa ogni cura,
Per que' sì cari palpiti
Che desti in ogni cor,
Donna, ricevi l'ultimo
Serto ed il mesto addio:
Omaggio così tenero
Non ricuoprir d'oblio;
Son delle nostre lagrime
Cospersi questi fior . . .

Ma con quei modi ingenui
Onde ogni core invogli
Ecco dei fior che cadono
Or questo, or quel raccogli
E in atto soavissimo
L'appressi al labbro al sen! . . .

E voi prescelti a tessere
Il serto dell' onore
O pegni troppo fragili
Di un immutato amore,
Voi perirete? ... ah serbane
Donna una fronda almen :

Teco l' adduci tenera
Di questo suol memoria,
E quando nei più fulgidi
Giorni della tua gloria
Per te l' Insubre popolo
Corone intreccerà,
Essa di queste lagrime
A Te favelli allora,
E come il soffio placido
Di un aura che innamora,
Cara di noi nell' anima
L' idea ti scenderà.

COMPLIMENTARY SONNETS

Addressed to Madame Malibran, by various writers.

1.

Sei pur cara, armonia, potente amico
Raggio che guidi a bellezze nascose ;
Per te dell' arti è lo splendor quì antico,
E all' antico il novel sempre rispose :

Cuo spiro l' idioma, ond' io pur dico,
Italico dolcissimo compose,
Cu a Sanzio colorivi e a Lodovico
L' eterne tele e le stupende cose.

O Donna, o voce, o armonioso incanto,
O letizia dell' alme, o meraviglia
Umiliato il mio carme ti canto.

Poiche t' udïo e poichè tanto apprese
Di cielo in Ce, nè ti può dir sua figlia,
Oh quanta gloria manca al bel paese !

II.

Il primo carme che di Te suonava
Per le Sebezie rive, io lo temprai,
E l' alma concitata a me il dettava,
L' alma che tutta inebbriar tu sai.

Or di te canto, ed alla turba ignava,
Che vinta dal rossore atterra i rai,
Dirò soltanto, che null' altra òsava
Sognar la gloria che mercando vai.

Uno è l' astro maggior dei firmamento,
E fra i tanti che battono un sentiero
Non produce ogni età che un sol portento ;

E tal Te chiama, o Donna, il mondo intero,
Chè la possanza d' ogni tuo concento
In estasi rapisce ogni pensiero.

III.

Son Vate incolto: e la mia cetra umìle
Polverosa e negletta sen giacea:
Maria mi scosse, e sol Maria potea
Mover mio canto, e sublimar mio stile.

S' arretri, e frema, e sperdasi ogni vile
Ch' osa toccar tua fama!—Tu sei Dea
Non sei mortale; ed al tuo dir si bea
Anche il più rozzo cor . . . . Non hai simìle!

Euterpe sola al paragon ti stia
In modular la voce, e nell' Agone
Abbia invidia Melpomene e Talia.

In terra a consolar l' alme scendesti,
E poi carca di palme e di corone,
Ritornerai nel Ciel ove nascesti.

In Segno di Vera Stima,
G. Battista Gottardi,
Artista Drammatico.

IV.

Allor che sciogli ad ispirato canto
Tua bella voce, e tuoi soavi accenti,
Arte è unita a Natura, e i tuoi portenti
Immergon l'alme in delizioso incanto.

Sia che tu pinga amore all' ire accanto,
Sia che la gioja, e 'l riso, de' viventi
I sensi inebbri sì che in que' momenti
Esprimon teco amore e riso e pianto.

O giovin donna, a tal giungesti ormai,
Che nel mondo non v' ha per te rivale:
Forse in cielo fra gli angioli ne avrai.

Ognun quì esclama, cui stupore assale
Quando di tua virtù beato il rendi:
Tanto merto non puote esser mortale.

THE END.

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